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# Security Council

Sixty-seventh year

*Provisional*

**6793**rd meeting

Wednesday, 27 June 2012, 10.25 a.m.

New York

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| *President*: | Mr. Li Baodong | (China) |
| *Members*: | Azerbaijan | Mr. Mehdiyev |
| | Colombia | Mr. Osorio |
| | France | Mrs. Le Fraper du Hellen |
| | Germany | Mr. Wittig |
| | Guatemala | Mr. Rosenthal |
| | India | Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri |
| | Morocco | Mr. Loulichki |
| | Pakistan | Mr. Haroon |
| | Portugal | Mr. Cabral |
| | Russian Federation | Mr. Churkin |
| | South Africa | Mr. Laher |
| | Togo | Mr. Kandangha-Bariki |
| | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | Sir Mark Lyall Grant |
| | United States of America | Ms. Rice |

## Agenda

The situation in Afghanistan

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2012/462)

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*The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.*

**Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

**The situation in Afghanistan**

**Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2012/462)**

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): Under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Afghanistan, Australia, Canada, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Latvia, New Zealand and Turkey to participate in this meeting.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Hervé Ladsous, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, to participate in this meeting.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Yuri Fedotov, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, to participate in this meeting.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Mr. Thomas Mayr-Harting, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, to participate in this meeting.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Mr. Stephen Evans, Assistant Secretary-General for Operations of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2012/462, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security.

I now give the floor to Mr. Ladsous.

**Mr. Ladsous** (*spoke in French*): Important developments have taken place in and affecting Afghanistan since the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Jan Kubiš, briefed the Security Council in March (see S/PV.6735).

Significant progress was made during two international conferences in Kabul and in Chicago — with a third to take place next month in Tokyo — that begin to define and shape the future of Afghanistan as it makes its way towards self-reliance. The Kabul ministerial conference that took place on 14 June was an opportunity for Afghanistan to demonstrate leadership on a process that is critical to its future stability — building regional cooperation and trust. Afghan-led, regionally owned and internationally supported, the Istanbul process has made impressive strides since its launch in November 2011, a little over seven months ago.

In Kabul, Heart of Asia nations endorsed seven confidence-building measures, developed through a consultative regional process, which address common threats and obstacles to regional stability, economic development and humanitarian response. More such measures are expected as the process continues. I am pleased that they have sought out the participation of relevant United Nations agencies, which of course will provide technical support to each initiative.

This process is an important new addition — particularly important because of its Afghan leadership — to the many bilateral, trilateral and multilateral forums already in place, including the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan, and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation. It should be seen as contributing to our shared goal of building a cooperative, stable and prosperous region.

In terms of regional initiatives of the United Nations system, I appreciate the role played by United Nations agencies in addressing entrenched challenges that clearly go beyond the ability of any one country in the region to address. First, I would like to note the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Let us recall that more than 3 million Afghan refugees are registered in Pakistan and Iran. That obviously has a huge impact on not just Afghanistan but also those two host countries. I also welcome, and urge the Council to support, the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees, which was launched in Geneva in May by Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran, with the support of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other members of the United Nations family, with a view to addressing the return and reintegration of Afghan refugees in a comprehensive and sustainable manner.

The production and trafficking of narcotics from Afghanistan undermines the stability of the region and affects the whole world. I am pleased that Executive Director Yuri Fedotov, of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, is here today to brief us on the latest developments related to counter-narcotics and cross-border crime.

(*spoke in English*)

The meeting on Afghanistan that took place on 21 May as part of the NATO Summit in Chicago went a long way towards defining the shape of, and the long-term support to, the Afghan National Security Forces. We saw important guarantees, both financial and technical, as well as a reconfirmation of NATO commitments to previously agreed timelines for transition. Providing that level of clarity and commitment on continued support to the security sector helps to dampen growing anxiety, both within Afghanistan as well as among its international partners, as to the post-2014 situation. It also reinforces the message from the international community that transition will not translate into an abandonment of Afghanistan.

As the Afghan National Security Forces gradually assume responsibility for the security of the country, we shall continue to advocate for the strengthening of their oversight and accountability mechanisms, particularly within police and local police structures. I wish to emphasize again that all parties — in particular Afghan security forces, given their increased responsibilities — must continue to prioritize the protection of civilians.

As the Secretary-General's report (S/2012/462) on Afghanistan notes, the past three months saw a dramatic decline in the number of security incidents over 2011. However, unfortunately, it was also marked by large-scale incidents and an increase in the use of tactics targeting civilians, particularly the indiscriminate use of improvised explosive devices and the targeted killing of civilians by anti-Government elements. Let us not forget that it is those forces that are responsible for up to 80 per cent of civilian casualties.

As Special Representative Kubiš highlighted in March, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) has documented that 2011 marked the fifth consecutive year of increasing civilian casualties, albeit with fewer incidents. That is simply not acceptable. We must therefore continue to urge all parties to the conflict to increase their efforts to protect civilians and call for individuals responsible to be held accountable.

On that note, I wish to make special mention of the 12 June decision by the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), following the tragic civilian deaths resulting from an air strike in Logar province six days earlier, to increase restrictions on the use of aerial munitions against civilian dwellings. Although, as I have said, the number of incidents attributed to pro-Government forces continues to decline, and is a small portion of the total — and those forces, notably ISAF, continue to vigorously adopt measures to reduce civilian casualties — UNAMA has repeatedly expressed concern that aerial operations have resulted in more civilian deaths and injuries than any other tactic used by pro-Government forces. Therefore, let me again say that that decision by ISAF is a very welcome development.

Security alone, however, will not bring lasting stability and peace to Afghanistan. Just as we have seen progress in defining long-term support to the security side, it is equally important to see the same level of commitment to the social-economic development sector. We therefore very much look forward to the upcoming Tokyo conference as an important step in that direction. The Secretary-General will head the United Nations delegation, which will include the UNAMA Special Representative and myself.

We have noted concerns from all sides that the fine words and commitments expressed during the many conferences on Afghanistan over the past decade be lived up to. To that end, I welcome the ongoing development of a framework and a mechanism that will track progress on such commitments and hold both the Afghan Government and donors accountable for their implementation. The mutual accountability mechanism, which should report through the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board, is expected to be agreed upon in Tokyo and will provide a solid foundation upon which to build long-term development support.

However, we must ensure that expectations surrounding what Afghanistan can do over a short time frame — given capacity and resource limitations and given the fragility of its nascent institutions — are realistic and do not prove self-defeating. We must keep in mind our overall objective, namely, to see a stable, self-reliant Afghanistan with effective institutions delivering essential services, justice and opportunities

to its people. We will reach that goal only if we continue to invest in Afghanistan's maturing institutions and in the priorities Afghans themselves set.

I welcome Afghan leadership on the processes that most affect the country and its people, starting with the prioritization of development objectives and the Heart of Asia process, which I mentioned earlier, but also including reconciliation initiatives and the preparation of upcoming elections.

The appointment of Salahuddin Rabbani to lead the High Peace Council signals the continued engagement, commitment and continuity on the part of the Afghan Government. The United Nations continues to stand ready to support the Council's efforts and looks forward to seeing an Afghan-led peace and reconciliation process gain momentum.

The upcoming 2014 elections will be a watershed moment, with significant impact on the consolidation of the progress made to date and on long-term stability. They should be held in full accord with the Constitution, to ensure a smooth political transition and to demonstrate Afghanistan's growing self-reliance and sovereignty. We welcome President Karzai's statement in Chicago in May that elections must be marked by integrity and must be free from internal or external interventions. By the way, we are already seeing a rise in political activity and debate ahead of the 2014 polls.

We also welcome the constructive consultation process on the electoral law, which the Independent Election Commission recently completed, as well as the decision to begin work on the voter registry, both of which are encouraging signs of an essential ingredient for a sound process — that is to say, inclusiveness.

In addition to the ongoing United Nations Development Programme's second phase of its Enhancing Legal and Electoral Capacity for Tomorrow project, which is providing electoral technical support, Special Representative Kubiš has been consulting with the Government and relevant institutions to determine how best the United Nations can assist the electoral process. There are still two years to go before elections, and it is critical that such Government decisions proceed apace.

As our report clearly shows, humanitarian issues continue to be a cause for concern. The spring floods this year have been particularly severe, following the very harsh 2011-2012 winter, and, of course, continuing conflict exacerbates already serious displacement issues. On her recent visit, the Emergency Relief Coordinator highlighted the extensive humanitarian needs, the uncertainties of the future and — I must say — the lagging support for this year's consolidated appeal. While we must aim over the longer term to link humanitarian assistance with development initiatives, we cannot neglect the urgent immediate needs right now on the ground.

Finally, allow me to turn to developments that more directly affect the future of the UNAMA Mission itself. Circumstances around the world — financial crises in major economies and competing demands for international attention — have combined to impact United Nations peace operations and have led to shrinking budgets. That will also affect UNAMA. Expectations that the Mission will be able to do more as the transition proceeds would not be realistic in the face of this greater fiscal austerity.

UNAMA and other special political missions must meet targets set by the General Assembly over two-year cycles. Of course, it is ultimately for United Nations budgetary bodies to determine budgets and resource requirements, but the budget we will put forward for UNAMA for 2013 will reflect the overall need for cuts that have been requested by Member States.

As noted in the report of the Secretary-General, a strategic decision has been made to reshape the footprint of UNAMA in the provinces, in line with recommendations from the comprehensive review undertaken last year at the request of the Security Council, with changes related to transition and with the latest Security Council mandate. That decision will certainly help to reduce costs.

If the Mission is to address the significant reduction of its budget, UNAMA will also need to review all aspects of its substantive and support structures and to prioritize its programming activities. Such an exercise would necessarily have an impact on the delivery of the mandate, the extent of which is yet to be determined and will soon be reported to the United Nations budgetary bodies and to the Council.

(*spoke in French*)

Informal discussions on the post-2014 international framework, including the role of the United Nations in Afghanistan, must take into consideration those budgetary and programmatic constraints, along with

needs of the transition and the situation on the ground. Such discussions must also be defined by an appropriate consultative process, first and foremost with the Afghan Government, so that the Council can make an informed decision.

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Ladsous for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Fedotov.

**Mr. Fedotov**: Thank you, Mr. President, for inviting me to address the Security Council. I am pleased to have the opportunity to brief the Council on the latest activities of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) designed to interrupt the flow of drugs and crime in the region.

The recent report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2012/462) specifically recognizes the threat of drugs and crime. Indeed, Afghanistan produces around 90 per cent of the world's opiates, and the southern part of the country is the world's largest opium-producing region.

Total global opium production amounted to around 7,000 tons in 2011. In Afghanistan, opium production increased from 3,600 tons in 2010 to 5,800 tons in 2011. The country's poppy-free provinces may also be falling for the second year running, down from 18 to 15. UNODC estimates that trafficking in opiates is a $68-billion business for the criminals. These drugs are responsible for the deaths of tens of thousands of people throughout the world every year, but Afghanistan also suffers from the highest rates of opiate prevalence in the world, as well as HIV/AIDS. Drug trafficking also undermines stability in the region, fuels organized crime and corruption, increases drug consumption and spreads HIV/AIDS.

As we move towards 2014, we cannot allow a vacuum to form that would further encourage the production of opium. That view was affirmed by my own recent visit to Afghanistan and Tajikistan. When I met with President Karzai, I stressed the need for the Afghan Government, at every level, to express its commitment to addressing the drug problem as a national priority. The President agreed to that. My visit to opium poppy fields in Badakhshan province showed that eradication efforts must be more vigorously supported by alternative development programmes.

Afghan counter-narcotics authorities are demonstrating their own commitment to combating poppy cultivation, but much more needs to be done. As of 19 June, a total of 11,000 hectares of poppy fields had been eradicated. That figure represents a 173 per cent increase compared to 2011. However it represents less than 10 per cent of total poppy cultivation area. Food zones, such as in Helmand province, are contributing to the decline in poppy cultivation in some areas, but more funds are needed to support such projects. Landowners are now being targeted by a new law that criminalizes the use of their land for poppy cultivation. We now look forward to meaningful implementation of that law. There are also signs that a plant disease may blight this year's crop, as it did in 2010. But plant disease offers no solution to the problem of Afghan's opiates, and stockpiles may well exist. Therefore, we cannot afford to take our foot off the accelerator.

At the political level, we are building momentum through the Paris Pact initiative, while developing integrated regional programmes. UNODC's $117-million country programme for Afghanistan was launched in May. The programme is closely linked to the Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries. Together, those programmes form part of UNODC's overall strategy to provide a coherent field response to drug trafficking, as well as closer cooperation among regional and international actors. Strengthened border controls are also an essential element of the strategy. Both programmes are connected to such bodies as the Triangular Initiative, the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre and Operation TARCET, which targets the precursor chemicals necessary to produce opium and heroin.

There are also new initiatives that are linked to the Regional Programme. The Criminal Assets Southern Hub initiative will target criminal profits by offering advice to national authorities. The Southern Trafficking Operational Plan will couple alternative livelihoods, while also maximizing law enforcement and interdiction efforts. The Maritime Regional Security Initiative will address the movement of trafficking into the sea, in particular between Iran and Pakistan. In May, we started the Regional Programme for South-Eastern Europe, which complements those activities by concentrating on Afghan heroin flowing through Central and West Asia and then on through the Balkans.

UNODC is also helping to create international and inter-agency partnerships. One example is the United Nations task force on transnational organized crime and drug trafficking, established by the Secretary-General in 2011. In Dushanbe on 1 June, I co-chaired the first regional meeting of the task force in Central Asia.

Today's thematic debate is timely. We stand midway between another key set of milestones in the international community's journey to support and assist Afghanistan. There are many challenges in Afghanistan, but I would encourage Member States to do everything possible to communicate the message that illicit drugs and crime are capable of undermining attempts to promote economic and social development in the country. Our work is in the interests of Afghanistan and the victims of illicit drugs, but it is also in the common interests of the international community.

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Fedotov for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Afghanistan.

**Mr. Tanin** (Afghanistan): Thank you very much, Mr. President, for convening this important meeting. We commend your able leadership of the Council this month. We also thank the Secretary-General for his report on Afghanistan (S/2012/462) and welcome the presence and insights of Under-Secretary-General Ladsous and Executive Director Fedotov.

A month ago, at the NATO Summit in Chicago, Afghanistan's friends and partners came together to express their unanimous support for the end of war and the beginning of a new phase in our enduring partnership, which was first envisioned in Lisbon in 2010. Our partnership will continue into the transformation decade, during which time Afghanistan will take full charge of its security, governance and development.

Just weeks ago, we inked the Enduring Strategic Partnership Agreement with the United States of America as the guiding framework of our bilateral cooperation for the long haul, solidifying mutual commitments, including on strengthened Afghan sovereignty, stability and prosperity in the years to come. Although the specifics of the partnership will continue to be crystallized, the agreement has been endorsed by both houses of the Afghan parliament, clearly manifesting the overwhelming support from all corners of the country.

As part of the new phase of international engagement in support of Afghanistan, we have also established strategic partnerships with Italy, France, the United Kingdom, Germany and, most recently, Australia. Furthermore, discussions are under way to conclude similar agreements with Turkey, Norway and the European Union. In our own region, we signed a strategic partnership with India, a country with which we have shared historic and traditional ties. Earlier this month, Afghanistan took an important step forward towards establishing a strategic and cooperative partnership with our other great neighbour, China.

The launch of the Istanbul process, in November 2011, was a milestone in the realization of a new regional order by which Afghanistan and other Heart-of-Asia countries joined hands for a common goal and future, namely, peace, stability and prosperity. The Heart of Asia ministerial conference held in Kabul less than two weeks ago advanced the objectives of the Istanbul process. As part of the conference outcome, we reaffirmed our solid commitment to implement a wide range of confidence-building measures. I take this opportunity to convey our gratitude to all friends and partners for their participation and support.

Afghanistan also obtained observer status to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization at its recent conference in Beijing. That was an important move. With all of those steps, Afghanistan is restoring its historic role as a land bridge and its potential to become a catalyst for peace and stability in the entire region.

We look forward to next month's Tokyo ministerial conference, where we aim to effectively address the areas of Afghanistan's economic sustainability and development, the fiscal gap, as well as to finalize a mutual accountability agreement between Afghanistan and the international community. In Tokyo, Afghanistan will present a comprehensive action plan on self-reliance and our national priority programmes. The conference will not be another pledging event, but an important venue for a solid commitment of the international community to the transition and transformation decade. Our thanks go to the friendly Government of Japan for its generosity in hosting the event.

The transition to Afghan ownership and leadership is our number one strategic priority. In that regard, I am pleased to note that we are making steady progress.

The third tranche of the security transition has officially commenced and includes some of the most conflict-prone provinces with the highest levels of insecurity. Needless to say, we are on track to complete the third phase before the end of the year, by which 75 per cent of the country's population will come under the responsibility of Afghan security forces.

As we strive to complete the security transition by 2013, the need for sustained support for the training and equipping of our national security forces is inevitable. The undertakings towards such support of NATO and other allies at the Chicago Summit will be particularly important.

Another core priority on the way forward will be a strong new focus on establishing a cleaner and more competent Government, through strengthening governance, fighting corruption and enforcing the rule of law. The reform agenda is at the centre of our efforts. At the same time, we are diligently addressing all influences that may pose a threat to national interests and to law and order. Such measures will enhance the full trust and confidence of all Afghans for the future.

A far more challenging task will be the implementation of the socio-economic component of the transition, which is vital to our State-building efforts. Central to that goal will be underscoring support for the Afghan national priority programmes, which emphasize — in addition to security and governance — agricultural development, human resources, infrastructure and the private sector, all of which are vital for our economic growth.

Our vision is of an Afghanistan that is a self-reliant State, standing on its own feet. Afghanistan will not remain an aid economy; we are working to significantly reduce aid dependency by the end of the transformation decade.

Advancing the peace process towards a successful outcome is a core element of our strategy to bring lasting peace to our people and nation. Pursued on the basis of national consensus, we are convinced that our reconciliation efforts remain the surest path to ending the conflict and ensuring a durable peace. Let there be no doubt, our Afghan-led peace process will not ensue at the expense of the hard-won democratic gains of the past decade, including human rights, the rights of women in particular.

In order to achieve a successful outcome to our reconciliation efforts, I wish to underscore the importance of resolute support from our immediate neighbours and other partners in the region and beyond. In that connection, I take this opportunity to express our gratitude for the support provided by the Council within the framework of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011).

The upcoming 2014 elections will be another important step towards Afghanistan's political maturity and the consolidation of democracy in our country. We are taking a number of measures, including electoral reforms, to ensure a smooth political transition consistent with our Constitution.

As we proceed through transition and into the transformation decade, international engagement will remain crucial. In that regard, we also look forward to advancing our close cooperation with the United Nations towards peace and stability in Afghanistan.

One of the greatest impediments to both development and security in Afghanistan is the illicit drug problem. Despite our challenges, Afghanistan is sparing no effort to rid our society of the menace of illicit drugs. Over the past five years, we have significantly reduced poppy cultivation. However, as the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Mr. Fedotov, said, there are a number of varying factors over which we have little or no control, including the impact the increase or decrease of poppy cultivation from one year to another.

This year alone, the eradication figures show an important increase — a three-fold increase — since the previous year. We are tracking down and bringing to justice an increased number of individuals involved in drug trafficking. As we know, drug trafficking is not an Afghan-only issue. A long-term solution is not possible without cooperation and coordination in addressing the dominant factors behind the drug problem, such as preventing the flow of chemical precursors into Afghanistan and providing Afghan farmers with alternative livelihoods.

As we continue our joint journey towards a peaceful and stable Afghanistan, building on the gains of the past, Afghanistan's enemies are still very much intent on derailing our progress and preventing our success. That is evident in the continued brutal acts of violence and terror by the Taliban and those behind

them, the latest of which was the massacre at Spozhmai Hotel, just outside Kabul, last weekend. It is a continued psychological war, a war of perception, a psychodrama.

However, no such shameful acts of terror will deter the will of the Afghan people from their ultimate goal of securing peace and prosperity. Afghans have come too far and endured far too many sacrifices to give up now. With such brutal acts, the Taliban are not threatening the existence of the State, they are just disrupting people's peaceful lives. Let us remain as committed as ever before to complete the journey we began a decade ago.

The Afghan people and Government express their gratitude to the international community for their resolute support for Afghanistan.

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): I shall now give the floor to the members of the Security Council. I would like to request that Council members limit their statements to no more than five minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously.

**Mr. Wittig** (Germany): At the outset, let me thank Under-Secretary-General Ladsous for his briefing, as well as Executive Director Fedotov for highlighting the pivotal role of counter-narcotics efforts for the stability and prosperity of Afghanistan and the entire region.

Germany aligns itself with the statement to be delivered later in this debate on behalf of the European Union.

"Cautious optimism" is the term used in the Secretary-General's report (S/2012/462) to sum up his overall assessment of the current situation in Afghanistan. We fully subscribe to that assessment. Significant progress has been made since the International Conference on Afghanistan held in Bonn last December. Whilethe transition is progressing, with 75 per cent of Afghans already living in areas under the Afghan security lead, the transformation decade, which we agreed upon in Bonn, is taking shape.

In the political field, the recent Heart of Asia ministerial conference held in Kabul was a strong demonstration of Afghan ownership and regional cooperation based on trust, confidence and shared values. Afghanistan is no longer perceived as a mere source of instability but is assuming its role at the heart of a regional process, which is now embarking on a set of concrete confidence-building measures. As expressed by the German Foreign Minister in Kabul, Germany will continue to support that process as an observer, offering our specific expertise in the areas of regional infrastructure and chambers of commerce.

While strengthening ties with the region, Afghanistan has also consolidated its partnerships at the global level though a number of cooperation agreements, including with my own country. The message is clear: Afghanistan is not going to be abandoned in 2014. The international community stands by its commitments.

In the area of security, that message was underscored at the NATO Summit held in Chicago in May, where partners committed to sustain and support Afghan security forces beyond 2014. However, against the backdrop of the military drawdown and its economic implications, sustaining the gains I just described will remain a major challenge.

Commitments in the security field need to be accompanied by a framework of long-term governance and development cooperation that leads to an economically self-sustained Afghanistan. The upcoming Tokyo conference will provide us with an opportunity to take bold steps in that regard. We commend the excellent work by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) in supporting the preparatory process in Kabul.

Mutual accountability will be key in Tokyo. While we stand ready to extend our cooperation beyond 2014, we expect clear commitments from the Afghan Government towards better governance, anti-corruption and human rights, as well as safeguarding the democratic achievements beyond 2014. President Karzai's recent speech in the Afghan Parliament contains strong messages in this regard that will need to be followed up within the Afghan Government and Administration.

For the very same reason, we fully subscribe to Mr. Fedotov's analysis that without progress in governance, development and law enforcement, progress in our counter-narcotics efforts also will be limited. We therefore support the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) comprehensive approach, which complements poppy-eradication programmes with targeted investments in law enforcement, criminal justice and livelihoods. We have been continuously funding UNODC's activities in those areas and will continue to do so.

When discussing Afghanistan's future beyond 2014, we cannot but underline the key role that the

United Nations will need to play, based on its unique legitimacy and experience. When it extended UNAMA's mandate in March (see S/PV.6738), the Council expressed its full support for the United Nations good offices in supporting Afghan-led and Afghan-owned reconciliation, building Afghan institutions and supporting the Afghan electoral process, ensuring coherence among donors, and supporting the regional process. In that context, we commend UNAMA's efforts to search for even more efficient ways to operate while ensuring that it maintains sufficient geographical coverage and is able to perform its role as mandated by the Council. The renewed deployment of international staff to UNAMA's Kunduz office and the significant security improvements at the office in Mazar-e-Sharif are welcome developments in that regard.

Our cautious optimism is grounded in the international community's ability to maintain a long-term partnership with Afghanistan. The United Nations will need to play a pivotal role in that regard. Let me assure the Council that Germany remains committed to a strong UNAMA that is able to live up to the high expectations placed upon it.

**Mr. Haroon** (Pakistan): As always, today's debate carries with it a very interesting sense of timing and history and, of course, of the important, essential aspects of the United Nations and its contribution — as well as that of the rest of the world — in Afghanistan. We are as ever grateful to Ambassador Zahir Tanin for his lucid statement, and many thanks are also due to Under-Secretary-General Hervé Ladsous for the broad coverage of his excellent and wide-ranging briefing on the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). The eye-opener from Mr. Yuri Fedotov of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) should be recognized before the malaise he describes wins regional support.

We must take cognizance of Mr. Ladsous's statement concerning the challenges of the mandate UNAMA must implement. The accountants wielding knives must be controlled, and the Mission must have resources adequate to the achievement of its goals. We must therefore ensure that any substantial reduction in the UNAMA budget will not affect the core objectives of the United Nations in Afghanistan. I cannot overemphasize this issue, which is the core of the matter at the moment. As Afghan institutions come of age, UNAMA too should continue to adapt to emerging trends and realities.

The Secretary-General's latest report (S/2012/462) and those preceding it provide useful updates on the situation in Afghanistan. As was said earlier, the Secretary-General has struck a note of cautious optimism, specifically concerning the areas of security transition, human development and the growth of Afghan institutions. We agree with him wholeheartedly. Nonetheless, while demonstrating confidence in Afghan transition efforts, the Secretary-General has rightly urged the donor community to refrain from unrealistic demands that ignore constraints on capacity. We believe that long-term engagement on the part of the international community is essential to Afghanistan's stability and economic development. In that context, deliberations at the forthcoming Tokyo conference will be important. We commend the Government of Japan for hosting the conference and look forward to its successful outcome.

The Secretary-General also reports progress in transitioning security responsibilities to the Afghan National Security Forces. Pakistan greatly values that progress, which it sees as a guarantee of sustained stability in Afghanistan, as evidenced — which the Council will be pleased to know — by my President's announcement at the NATO Summit in Chicago of Pakistan's financial contribution to the Afghan National Security Forces.

Besides helping to build the capacity of the Afghan National Security Forces, Pakistan has sought closer engagement with Afghanistan and its international partners on all security-related issues. Our leading participation in the seven confidence-building measures on 14 June in Istanbul manifests our commitment. We have done so by maintaining a robust presence of our forces along the international border. Our deployment of troops and paramilitaries in the border region far exceeds the number of international troops in the whole of Afghanistan, and has come at a considerable economic, political and human cost. Our ongoing intelligence and military cooperation with Afghanistan and our international counterparts is progressing smoothly, and recently the improvements in military cooperation have for once been acknowledged by all players.

Pakistan's narrative on Afghan security issues is untainted by polemics. Provocations perpetrated through actions on the ground and through rhetoric have not undermined our restraint. A recent example was the 24 June attack on a Pakistani border post in

which 17 security personnel lost their lives. The matter is being taken up with Afghanistan at the highest level for a bilateral matter.

The latest attack took place where there is apparently a sizeable Afghan National Security Forces and international presence. It is a grave incident that unfortunately is not unprecedented. But our response to such attacks is always to go through official channels. Unlike others, we neither play the blame game nor conduct diplomacy through media. Such restraint, however, should not be taken for granted. Preventing a recurrence of such incidents is absolutely imperative, and safe havens for such people in Afghanistan must be eliminated.

The Secretary-General's report enumerates many challenges to the Afghan peace and reconciliation process. He has characterized progress on reconciliation as slow and uneven. The long-term solution to the challenges in Afghanistan lies in a sustainable reconciliation process. The policy must be transparent, not a covert one that panders to the vagaries of domestic politics. The sustainability of that process can be ensured only if all stakeholders not only believe in it themselves but also share the goal of reconciliation. The process must not be complicated by inexplicable caveats and conditions. The idea of coerced reconciliation flies in the face of the obvious lessons of Afghan history: that Afghan leadership, ownership of and willing participation in all such matters is absolutely essential.

For our part, we are and will remain committed to an Afghan-led and -owned reconciliation process. So far, unfortunately, we see no panacea for delivering peace in Afghanistan, and the current handling of the war there may perhaps be placing any such expectations outside the realm of possibility for the moment.

Despite the best efforts of the world community and the United Nations, Pakistan is still host — and, unfortunately, hostage — to the largest single population of Afghan refugees. In doing so — despite the lack of acknowledgment or funding and an abundance of unjustified, unfair hyperbole — we remain a major contributor, easing the humanitarian burden on Afghanistan at significant economic, social and security costs to the already overburdened people of Pakistan.

We therefore attach great importance to the outcome of the international conference held in Geneva last month. The solution strategy agreed on at the conference should be underpinned by a strong commitment of sustained support from the international community. We must look beyond scapegoating and look forward to those commitments coming to fruition. Meanwhile, Pakistan is hurting. I would suggest stepping up to the plate and bearing what must be borne.

To return to Mr. Fedotov: the policy of treating any production of narcotics with kid gloves must be abandoned. A policy has been in place that aims to avoid antagonizing farmers and that has meant that military and police forces would no longer participate in the eradication of poppy fields. This was stated in a recent article in the Washington Post, and, of course, dilated upon pretty seriously by the adviser Mr. Vali Nasr in his book *The Rise of Islamic Capitalism: Why the New Muslim Middle Class is the Key to Defeating Extremism*.

However, we welcome the Afghanistan country programme for 2012-14 launched by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime last month. The programme's judicious implementation should be finely honed to help address the narcotics problem, as highlighted in the Afghan Opium Survey of December 2011 and UNODC's Opium Risk Assessment of April 2012. We are rightly warned by the UNAMA report that the financial impact of the departure of the international forces might enhance the attraction towards narcotics. The warning calls for the world to acknowledge that and to do something about it now by initiating effective prevention measures.

Even though my friend Ambassador Tanin did not mention Pakistan in his statement — many others have not done so either, and I do not know whether to thank him — Pakistan remains steadfast.

I will conclude by reiterating our commitment to a peaceful and stable Afghanistan. It is to our own benefit. We have vital stakes in that, as stated by Pakistan's Foreign Minister during the recently held Heart of Asia ministerial conference on the theme "For Pakistan, Kabul is the most important capital of the world."

Meanwhile, it would be inappropriate for me not to welcome the recent policy statement of the International Security Assistance Force on reducing civilian casualties caused by air strikes. I pray that that also applies to other parties.

Our Afghan brethren in Pakistan have suffered for far too long. We hope and pray for an early end to such

a plight so that our two peoples can embark on a joint quest for progress and development, integrated with the rest of a rising Asia and the world.

**Sir Mark Lyall Grant** (United Kingdom): I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2012/462) and Under-Secretary-General Ladsous and Mr. Fedotov for their briefings this morning. I also welcome Ambassador Tanin's contribution to today's debate.

In the past six months, the international community has made significant progress on the commitments made at the December 2011 Bonn Conference. Efforts are now focused on reinforcing our enduring commitment to Afghanistan. That means not only ensuring the security of Afghanistan and its people, but also sustaining the political and economic progress, including through the support of neighbouring countries. I will focus my statement today on the progress being made in those three areas.

First, on the security transition, I welcome the success of the NATO Chicago Summit in May, which saw the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) contributing countries demonstrate our long-term commitment to Afghanistan, in particular by agreeing the NATO strategic plan for Afghanistan, and make incredible contributions towards sustaining the Afghan National Security Forces after 2014. That sent a clear message to the Afghan people that we will not abandon them, and to the insurgency that it cannot wait us out.

The protection of the Afghan civilian population remains at the core of ISAF's military strategy. ISAF forces have worked extremely hard to minimize the level of civilian casualties and have introduced new rules to govern the use of force. As the Secretary-General's report highlights, we have had considerable success in that. That is in stark contrast, of course, to the insurgency, which continues to target civilians indiscriminately.

Secondly, on the political and economic progress, the United Kingdom looks forward to the July Tokyo Development Conference on Afghanistan, hosted by the Government of Japan. It is absolutely vital to Afghanistan's future stability that we send a strong signal of our enduring commitment through the transformation decade 2015 to 2025. Therefore, we, the international community, should look to provide concrete aid pledges for at least the period 2015 to 2017. The United Kingdom has already done so. We call on others in the international community to follow suit.

Alongside such undertakings, the United Kingdom strongly supports all efforts to ensure that Tokyo offers an opportunity for the participation of Afghan civil society, including women. The United Kingdom works closely with the Government of Afghanistan, local and international non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and international partners to improve the status of women in Afghanistan so that they can play a full role in a future peaceful Afghan State.

Of course, the Government of Afghanistan must also deliver on the commitments that it has made to the Afghan people and to the international community, in particular by continuing with key economic and governance reforms and by working towards greater self-reliance. The centrepiece of the Tokyo conference will be a mutual accountability framework, setting out Afghan and international commitments for the post-2014 period. That work will complement the commitments made on security at the Chicago Summit and will move us another step closer to a sustainable future for Afghanistan.

Thirdly, among all the challenges and opportunities facing Afghanistan today, the relationship between Afghanistan and its neighbours is vital, as other speakers have highlighted this morning. At the Heart of Asia ministerial conference in Kabul earlier this month, Afghanistan's neighbours expressed their mutual interest in Afghanistan's long-term stability. The United Kingdom welcomes the assistance provided by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the supporting role of United Nations agencies in the Istanbul process. I would also like to take this opportunity to reiterate the United Kingdom's readiness to contribute to confidence-building measures, where requested by the region.

The United Kingdom supports a strong UNAMA presence as we move through the transition period, and beyond. UNAMA plays an essential role in coordinating international efforts and in providing the Afghan Government with support in order to deliver on its own commitments. We welcome UNAMA's view that the inevitable financial constraints are a valuable opportunity to ensure that its future operations are closely focused on the core mandate and that the relationship between UNAMA and the United Nations country team is regularly reviewed.

In conclusion, the international community has made real progress against the commitments made at Bonn in December 2011, but there is still work to be done to secure the future of Afghanistan and its people. The United Kingdom remains resolute in our determination to work with the Government of Afghanistan and all international partners in that crucial endeavour.

**Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri** (India): I join others in thanking you, Mr. President, for scheduling today's debate on the situation in Afghanistan. I would also like in particular to thank Ambassador Zahir Tanin, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, for his statement. We also thank the Secretary-General for his latest report (S/2012/462), and are appreciative of the briefings by Under-Secretary-General Hervé Ladsous and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Executive Director Yuri Fedotov.

India shares a privileged, historical and civilizational relationship with Afghanistan. During the past decade, our relationship has been renewed and consolidated by our contribution to the rebuilding and reconstruction of Afghanistan. India has pledged up to $2 billion in development and humanitarian assistance. We remain unwavering in our commitment to assisting the people of Afghanistan in their endeavour to build a peaceful, stable, democratic and prosperous nation.

With the first meeting of the India-Afghanistan Partnership Council in New Delhi in May 2012, the process of implementing the India-Afghanistan comprehensive strategic partnership agreement has been set in motion. That process will further intensify our broad-based development assistance to Afghanistan in a wide range of sectors that have been identified by the Government of Afghanistan as priority areas for reconstruction and development. We will continue our engagement in reconstruction and rehabilitation projects in alignment with the Afghan National Development Strategy.

We are fully cognizant that the economic viability of Afghanistan depends on its fuller integration into its neighbourhood so that it can regain its historical role as a land bridge between South Asia, Central Asia, the Middle East and Eurasia.

We fully support the work undertaken in favour of regional confidence-building as a critical component of international efforts to support Afghanistan as it takes forward the task of national reconciliation even as it assumes full responsibility for its own security.

India fully supports an inclusive and transparent Afghan-led and Afghan-owned process of reconciliation, as opposed to an internationally led process, accompanied by an inclusive political process and intra-Afghan dialogue, the renunciation of violence, the cutting of ties to terrorist groups, abiding by the Afghan Constitution and its protections for human rights, including the rights of women.

At the Kabul ministerial meeting of the Istanbul process, India expressed its willingness to take the lead in the implementation of two confidence-building measures (CBMs): the Chambers of Commerce CBM and the Commercial Opportunities CBM. Further, India will be hosting the Delhi Investment Summit on Afghanistan in New Delhi tomorrow, 28 June. The objective of the Summit is to attract foreign investment in Afghanistan in the light of new opportunities opening up in various sectors in that country. The Summit will include presentations by the Government of Afghanistan and others on the investment climate and opportunities in Afghanistan, and panel discussions on cross-cutting issues and sector specific themes. Potential regional and international investors, including Indian companies, will participate in the event.

We see the Delhi Investment Summit as a critical link between the Istanbul process and the Tokyo conference to be held on 8 July. The Summit will also be helpful in countering the current narrative of anxiety about withdrawal, reversing it with a narrative of opportunity and hope. We are holding the Summit fully cognizant that the aforementioned CBMs require an atmosphere of security in the country and in the region. Amid the ongoing transition, the security gains achieved in Afghanistan during the past decade are still tenuous and fragile; security concerns remain paramount.

The principal problem in Afghanistan remains the existence of terrorism with ideological, financial and logistical support coming from beyond the country's borders. We need concerted action to isolate and root out the syndicate of terrorism that includes elements of the Al-Qaida, Taliban, Lashkar-e-Toiba and other terrorist and extremist groups. We also need to create an enabling environment in which the Afghan people can live in peace and security and decide their future themselves, without outside interference, coercion or intimidation.

Moving forward, we need sustained international commitment in order to strengthen the Afghan Government's capacity for governance, security and economic development. Enhanced development assistance and foreign investment in Afghanistan and the building of regional linkages are critical to ensuring an irreversible transition in the country.

The Secretary-General's latest report rightly observes that the serious challenges confronting Afghanistan

> "must not ... be underplayed, with the military drawdown and an expected reduction in development assistance giving rise to uncertainty about the sustainability of such gains" (*S/2012/462, para. 60*).

We support the good work being done by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan. The international community as a whole must continue to work with renewed vigour and unity of purpose towards strengthening the efforts of the Afghan Government to seek solutions that are inclusive and led by the Afghan people themselves.

**Mr. Rosenthal** (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2012/462). We also thank Mr. Hervé Ladsous for his briefing and Ambassador Tanin for his helpful contribution. We would also like to congratulate Mr. Jan Kubiš on the excellent work he has done leading the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), although he is not able to be with us at today's meeting.

We meet today at a time when we find ourselves at a special crossroads of national sovereignty and mutual responsibility and accountability between Afghanistan and the international community. Security transition is under way, and important international and regional conferences have been held, such as those in Kabul and Chicago, not to mention one of the most important ahead of us, to be held in July in Tokyo.

The Secretary-General observes in his report that there is scope for measured optimism with regard to the situation in Afghanistan. However, our optimism hinges on the extent to which the international community upholds its commitments, Afghanistan fully assumes its sovereign responsibilities, and the United Nations consolidates its presence on the ground. According to our assessment of the reporting period and that to come, the challenges are immense. I would like to comment on four areas.

First, we fully support the process of Afghan reconciliation led by the Afghans themselves. We welcome the fact that a Chair for the High Peace Council has finally been appointed, particularly since it is Salahuddin Rabbani. We are encouraged that the process will be newly invigorated since, in the absence of a consolidated reconciliation effort and in the light of the exit of NATO security forces by 2014, it is likely that ongoing crises will continue to become more complicated. The report confirms that the presence of the United Nations will be indispensable beyond 2014. We trust that we will prepare ourselves in a timely manner for the new phase. Likewise, we fully support the good offices of UNAMA.

Secondly, we note that the transition is proceeding normally and we are satisfied that the recent NATO Summit ratified its commitments and recognized the need for its continued participation, including beyond 2014. Likewise, we take note of the announcement by President Karzai of the beginning of the third phase of transfer of security responsibilities to the Afghan forces. However, we would highlight that the transition cannot and must not be limited to security. The sources of insecurity are not limited to physical security, but also include food security, guarantees for human development, human rights and respect for the rule of law.

Thirdly, two days ago we held in this Chamber an open debate on the protection of civilians, which gave us much food for thought (see S/PV.6790). Guatemala remains concerned about the protection of civilians in Afghanistan. Although we note the recent fall in the number of victims, we remain concerned about the calibre of attacks, such as the assassination of a member of the High Peace Council and attacks on schools and people who work in the education system in Afghanistan. We condemn all indiscriminate attacks on civilians, including NATO air raids. Likewise, we find the situation faced by women and children in Afghanistan to be deplorable. We call for tangible measures to be taken in order to protect and guarantee their rights.

Fourthly, I should like to underscore the need for international cooperation, without which the progress that has been made to date could be reversed. That progress must be sustained, and we must be prepared for

a long-term commitment in that respect. We are certain that the Tokyo Conference will be the appropriate forum for consolidating the advances made, with the United Nations leading the process.

In that respect, we take note of the fact that the Mission will be re-evaluating its activities and optimizing its resources in order to focus its efforts on the discharge of its basic mandate. We hope that that exercise will guarantee the availability of the resources necessary to ensure that the Mission's mandate is not adversely affected. Also important are coherence and coordination between humanitarian actors and those involved in development efforts within the framework of UNAMA.

Finally, we reiterate that Guatemala supports Afghanistan's aspirations to move forward along the path towards democracy, prosperity and stability. The international community shares that vision and should make that clear in the form of political will. The current situation is testimony to the need to continue to make progress in electoral reform in accordance with the Constitution, strengthen regional ties and implement confidence-building measures, as well the need for a strong commitment on the part of Afghanistan to good governance, the combat against corruption and drug trafficking, the strengthening of human rights and the consolidation of the rule of law.

**Ms. Rice** (United States of America): I thank Under-Secretary-General Ladsous for his briefing today detailing the important work that the staff of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) performs every day under very difficult conditions, and Executive Director Fedotov for his briefing on this important issue. I also thank Ambassador Tanin for joining today's discussion. As always, we value his participation and his close cooperation with the Security Council.

In the last few months, the international community has underscored its support for strengthening Afghan leadership and Afghan sovereignty while reinforcing its commitment to Afghanistan well beyond 2014. As President Obama has said, the message to the Afghan people is clear: "As you stand up, you will not stand alone".

This morning I will focus my remarks on recent and upcoming events that have reinforced this message. On 2 May, Afghanistan and the United States signed a strategic partnership agreement. It is one of several bilateral agreements that Afghanistan has concluded that demonstrates how the international community continues to come together to support Afghanistan as it prepares for the transition in 2014. The agreement provides a long-term framework for relations between Afghanistan and the United States after a responsible drawdown of United States forces. It reaffirms the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Afghanistan. I want to be clear that the United States does not seek any permanent American military bases.

The post-2014 United States presence will be shaped in close consultation with the Afghan Government and will support Afghanistan's social and economic development, security, institutions and regional cooperation. The agreement enshrines a range of mutual commitments, including on combating terrorism and strengthening democratic institutions.

The United States welcomes the strong Afghan commitment to strengthening accountability, transparency and oversight and to protecting the human rights of all Afghans — men and women. Afghanistan and the United States have taken steps together to show that Afghanistan's progress will be irreversible and that our commitment is real and enduring.

The strategic partnership is just one piece of a larger international effort to work with the Afghans for a successful transition. At the NATO summit held in Chicago in May, world leaders reaffirmed the Lisbon framework for transition in Afghanistan and further outlined the support that the alliance and individual nations will provide to the Afghan military and police after 2014. As the Afghans assume full responsibility for security by the end of 2014, the enemies of the Afghan people should know that there will be steadfast and capable Afghan forces standing against them, with strong NATO support.

President Karzai's recent announcement of the third of five tranches of areas to transition to Afghan security lead is an important step forward. As transition begins in those areas, nearly 75 per cent of the population of Afghanistan will be living in provinces, districts and villages where Afghan forces are beginning to lead. That would not be possible without the growing strength of the Afghan National Security Forces, which remain essential to our shared goal of an Afghanistan that can secure and govern itself.

The transition is on track. Afghans are increasingly standing up for their own security and future, and NATO remains united in its support for the Lisbon timetable and an enduring commitment to Afghanistan.

The region is also supporting Afghanistan through its transition. We applaud the recent Heart of Asia ministerial Conference in Kabul, which endorsed a process of continuous dialogue and confidence-building measures that will contribute to achieving regional peace and stability, and we welcome the positive role that UNAMA played in helping to ensure that the Conference was a success.

Security improvements will also contribute to the sustainable reintegration of returning Afghans and enable economic opportunity. We are encouraged by the success of the International Conference on Afghan refugees organized in May by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and urge the United Nations to continue to focus attention on the needs of high-return communities to ensure voluntary and sustainable reintegration.

The March Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan, held in Dushanbe, accelerated Afghanistan's growing connections with its South and Central Asian neighbours. We also applaud the private-sector conference being hosted in New Delhi this week to promote investment in Afghanistan's people and industries.

We look forward to the Tokyo Conference next week, which is an important opportunity for the Afghan Government to clearly commit to improving governance and intensifying the fight against corruption. Those reforms are vital. Afghanistan cannot rely on donor financing indefinitely. Sustainable development requires private investment and improved regional connectivity. As Afghanistan makes progress on governance and anti-corruption, the United States and the international community will take concrete steps of our own to help, as we promised at Bonn. Despite serious fiscal challenges of our own, our continued investment in Afghanistan is essential, and it should come from both Governments and the private sector.

The coming months will be a dynamic time for Afghanistan. The Afghan people, the international community, the United Nations and UNAMA have been unfaltering in their commitment to Afghanistan. I want to underscore the enduring importance of the work of the United Nations and UNAMA, from its good offices to promote regional cooperation and co-chairing of the Joint Coordination Monitoring Board, to its humanitarian assistance and support for refugees and internally displaced persons. The United Nations has remained steadfastly committed to the Afghan people, and we are grateful. The Afghan Government and people, the region and the international community have demonstrated their resolve and long-term commitment to a secure, stable and prosperous Afghanistan. The United States will work with all of them every step of the way.

**Mr. Cabral** (Portugal): Thank you, Mr. President, for giving me the floor and organizing this debate. I would like to begin by thanking Under-Secretary-General Hervé Ladsous and Executive Director Yuri Fedotov for their briefings. I also welcome the presence of Ambassador Tanin and his statement. They have all given us a broad and accurate depiction of the current situation in Afghanistan and described the activities of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

I would like to focus now on three points that Portugal deems of outstanding importance.

First, I would like to mention capacity-building within the Afghan National Security Forces now that the third tranche of the transition is under way and that the Chicago Summit has determined that the NATO-led combat mission in Afghanistan will cease in 2014. Professional, capable and sustainable security forces are absolutely indispensable if a free, independent and democratic Afghanistan is to provide essential services and goods to its population and to continue to play its role in the region and in the world.

Portugal entirely supports the efforts to focus on the training of security forces, particularly the police, and to ensure that they are more professional and better equipped, both in materiel and in capacity to deliver. As such, I believe that the following sentence in the Secretary-General's report clearly illustrates a crucial capacity for the security forces to have in the very specific Afghan framework:

> "The United Nations continues to advocate for attention to accountability mechanisms within the Afghan security forces, ensuring the protection of civilians and children amid conflict, as well as the specific needs of women and girls as a central component of transition and post-transition security frameworks." (*S/2012/462, para. 12*)

In this regard, measures taken recently to prioritize community-based policing, strengthen crime detection and prevention, safeguard human rights and combat violence against women and children cannot but be commended and encouraged. We find it particularly noteworthy that the national police plan sets a truly ambitious goal of inducting 5,000 women into the police by 2014. Women agents are essential elements for addressing serious cases of crimes against women and girls, and have shown all over the world that their action has a tangible impact in the fight against gender-based violence and the promotion and protection of the human rights of women.

Secondly, I would like to mention the issue of human rights in Afghanistan. The challenges caused by the security situation in the country are of the utmost seriousness and defy the time constraints of a Security Council debate. Suffice it to say this time that Portugal is encouraged by the declining trend in civilian casualties, and we hope that it may be maintained over time. We continue to witness the most blatant disrespect for civilians by the insurgents, to whom more than 80 per cent of all casualties can safely be attributed. Reaction by the authorities of Afghanistan is imperative, not only as an element of the ongoing struggle for peace in the country, but also as a matter of addressing the essential needs of the population.

As regards the human rights of women, we hear of efforts to achieve the adherence of the Government of Afghanistan to the principles of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security. The development of an action plan to implement the resolution appears to us to be a very relevant instrument for strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights and the rule of law, and is in line, furthermore, with the mutual commitments assumed at the Bonn Conference. The Afghan Government and security forces may count on Portugal's full support and available expertise for that task.

Finally, I would say a few brief words on the multilateral efforts undertaken by both Afghanistan and its friends and partners throughout the world. "Geography is destiny" has become a catchphrase, sometimes all too easily misused. Afghanistan consistently shows that it can find friends and partners that are at a great distance but are clearly and seriously committed to a peaceful and prosperous Afghanistan. The path chosen by Afghanistan — the path of international partnership and productive interaction with its neighbours — provides an opportunity for the development of its resources. It shows, at the same time, how truly regional and international the problems that afflict Afghanistan are. These include issues such as counter-narcotics, energy and transportation networks, which require international cooperation at its highest level.

I conclude by reiterating my country's support for the work of UNAMA. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan has played and will continue to play an essential role in strengthening Afghan institutions towards peace, democracy and the promotion and protection of human rights, and in supporting Afghanistan's full assumption of leadership and ownership in the security, governance and development areas.

**Mr. Osorio** (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Hervé Ladsous for his briefing, Mr. Yuri Fedotov for his statement on the drug situation, and our colleague Ambassador Zahir Tanin, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, for sharing with the Council his national vision with regard to the country's situation.

In his report (S/2012/426), the Secretary-General expresses his views on the evolution of the transition towards Afghan responsibility and leadership in the area of security, including the fact that 75 per cent of the Afghan population is now located in areas where national forces have taken control.

We welcome the fact that no significant deterioration in public order has taken place and that there has been no marked change in security trends in the transition areas. There are positive signs, but there remain certain areas of vulnerability that must be overcome — hence the Secretary-General's use of the term "cautious optimism" (S/2012/426, para. 60).

The capacity and professionalism of the Afghan security and police forces must continue to be enhanced, including through the institutionalization of mechanisms for accountability and fighting impunity while strengthening measures to protect civilians, ensure respect for human rights, and secure the command and control structure. The contribution of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and the NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan will continue to be essential to that end.

In this respect, I would like to highlight the declaration issued by the Heads of State and Government

of ISAF troop-contributing countries during the Chicago Summit. In that declaration, they reiterated their commitment to the security of Afghanistan beyond 2014 and announced that the NATO force will thereafter cease to be a combat force and will be converted into a new training, advice and assistance mission.

We must not minimize the potential impact of the reduction of military personnel and development on the economic situation in terms of job losses and even increases in humanitarian needs. Therefore, a national political consensus must be prioritized and international cooperation and support in the long term must be guaranteed. We stress the need to maintain a broad and balanced approach during the transition that would take into account not only the security situation, but also socio-economic development, governance and the rule of law.

The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and the Special Representative must continue to guide international cooperation and assistance activities and stress the empowerment and strengthening of the role of Afghan institutions so that they are able to shoulder their responsibilities in priority areas, facilitating the political process towards peace and reconciliation, security, governance, economic development and regional cooperation. The United Nations must continue to play a central role in the coordination of international efforts with national authorities in order to ensure their consistency with the priorities identified by Afghanistan and to avoid duplication of efforts.

Violence continues to be one of the main factors affecting the Afghan population.

The progress in the political and reconciliation process has been affected by numerous security incidents, including the 48 reported last week, which resulted in many civilian victims. It is important that all parties show clearly that they are committed to the process of dialogue and reconciliation being pursued by the Afghan Government. We are confident that the difficulties can be overcome and that the Taliban will commit themselves to renouncing violence and terrorism and will accept the Constitution.

Violence is also affecting the humanitarian situation, and therefore pressure must be brought to bear on all parties to the conflict to ensure that they respect humanitarian principles and allow humanitarian assistance to reach those that need it most. That should be an essential principle of participation in the process of reconciliation.

With regard to the global drug problem as it affects Afghanistan and the region, we listened with interest to what Mr. Fedotov said with regard to the increase in financial and technical cooperation between the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Government of Afghanistan, with the primary goal of strengthening the capacity of national authorities. Those efforts should go hand-in-hand with the strengthening of alternative development programmes that provide viable and sustainable options to those who abandon the growing and production of illicit drugs.

We would also stress the regional joint initiatives that have been undertaken and the constructive and ongoing cooperation of various regional and extraregional actors in such strategies for applying the principle of shared responsibility. Colombia once again expresses its readiness to work bilaterally with Afghanistan in order to address that and other aspects of organized crime.

We have high hopes for the Tokyo conference that will be held on 8 July. There the international community should reiterate its commitment to work towards a stable, democratic and prosperous Afghanistan. It should also pass on the message that the country will not be abandoned in terms of its social and development needs after the stage of transition and that that partnership will be maintained during the decade of its transformation. Although the donors must avoid making unrealistic demands and acknowledge the limits of the institutional capacity, there must be mutual commitments that will enable us to regularly analyse long-term commitments, including the adoption of measures to fight crime and corruption.

The Kabul process and the national priority programmes should continue to be the policies that govern the commitments and responsibilities of the process within the framework of the principles of Afghan ownership and leadership and with respect for the sovereignty and unity of the country.

Consensus for deepening and expanding the relationship between Afghanistan and the international community should contribute to consolidating the State and its ability to exercise its primary responsibilities and respond to the needs of the population. There continue to be numerous challenges to stability and that is why a sustainable transition requires a State structure

that can guarantee governability and economic stability at the local and national levels. That will include the creation of jobs and economic opportunities, as well as the provision of and access to justice. Those are fundamental elements in order to guarantee a successful transition in Afghanistan.

**Mr. Laher** (South Africa): South Africa thanks the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Hervé Ladsous, for introducing the quarterly report of the Secretary-General on Afghanistan (S/2012/462). We also thank the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Mr. Yuri Fedotov, for his briefing. We welcome the participation of the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan in this debate and thank him for sharing the views of his delegation.

In assessing the situation in Afghanistan over the past three months, it is clear that while some progress has been made, particularly towards strengthening Afghan leadership and ownership, there have been setbacks that undermine the progress achieved. We wish to reiterate that political dialogue and reconciliation are critical for ensuring sustainable peace in Afghanistan. Clearly, there can be no military solution to the conflict there. We therefore welcome the Afghan Government's persistent initiatives to engage with the armed opposition and the continued calls by President Karzai for the armed opposition to lay down their arms. In that regard, we welcome the appointment of Salahuddin Rabbani as Chair of the High Peace Council and his stated objective of improving the inclusiveness of the Council.

We were optimistic at attempts to foster peace and reconciliation by the engagement of all parties. It is pivotal for the long-term stability of Afghanistan that all political role-players overcome their differences and commit to national reconciliation and a political solution.

We welcome the legal and legislative framework that is currently being put in place to ensure fair, transparent and inclusive presidential elections in 2014. While those processes are commendable, those efforts should not detract attention away from crucial contemporary challenges.

My delegation is concerned about the incidents of violence directed against women and the challenges that women continue to face in the economic, social and cultural spheres.

In spite of the decrease in security incidents and civilian casualties during the reporting period, there has been a rise of targeted killings of civilians, including children, and an ongoing campaign of violence directed at schools and educators. Those acts should be condemned. Civilian casualties resulting from International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) air-strikes, as well as anti-Government use of improvised explosive devices, remain a concern. We wish to underline that all the armed elements operating in Afghanistan have the responsibility for ensuring that unarmed civilians are protected. A failure by both State and non-State actors to uphold that responsibility should not go unpunished. The Secretary-General, in his ninth report on the protection of civilians (S/2012/376), underlined the importance of accountability. In that regard, we are reminded that in its presidential statement on justice and the rule of law (S/PRST/2012/1), adopted on 19 January, the Security Council reiterated its call to all parties to armed conflict to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law and to take all required steps to protect civilians.

We are concerned by recent developments that again witnessed increased tensions between members of the local communities and the ISAF. We call on the ISAF to undertake efforts to mitigate the loss of civilian life and ensure respect for the cultural and religious heritage of the population.

Ensuring the long-term protection of civilians requires building national institutions in the area of the rule of law, justice and security sector reform. In that regard, we welcome the fact that the surge target strength of the Afghan National Police and the Afghan National Army is ahead of their 2012 targets. We note the timeline for the international military drawdown and the commitment for a post-ISAF mission to conduct training and development of the Afghan security services, announced at the NATO Chicago Summit.

Security in Afghanistan at a national level should continue to be reinforced by efforts at a regional level to consolidate peace, stability and development. We therefore welcome the political dialogue and cooperation between Afghanistan and its neighbours during the reporting period. There has been significant bilateral contact between Afghanistan and the countries of the region, which has resulted in strengthened economic, political, security and socio-cultural links. Those initiatives were bolstered by the recently held Heart of Asia ministerial conference in Kabul. The upcoming

Delhi conference, which will focus on investment, is also a welcome initiative.

There can be no doubt that there is an inextricable link between development and security in Afghanistan. The socio-economic and humanitarian challenges confronted by Afghanistan are significant. It is therefore important that, despite the financial situation facing the international community, we should continue our support to the Government and people of Afghanistan, in line with the commitments of the Bonn Conference in the area of direct financial support, and towards the country's long-term economic growth. The upcoming Tokyo conference will therefore be important in consolidating global support for Afghanistan's development and long-term economic sustainability, and also in ensuring that the gains registered over the past 10 years are not reversed. We note that Afghanistan will present a comprehensive action plan on self-reliance on their national priority programmes at that meeting. That is commendable and it affirms the Afghan ownership of its own development.

In conclusion, we wish to stress that national ownership and leadership is crucial to achieving political, security and socio-economic progress in Afghanistan. For its part, the international community should continue its supportive role in the country's move from conflict to stability and prosperity.

South Africa stresses that given the magnitude of these challenges, a comprehensive strategy incorporating security, humanitarian efforts, good governance and socio-economic development is required. In this regard, we wish to underscore the central role of UNAMA in supporting the Government of Afghanistan and coordinating international assistance to the country. The continued role played by bilateral and multilateral partners remains indispensable.

**Mr. Loulichki** (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): Allow me at the outset to thank Under-Secretary-General Hervé Ladsous for his comprehensive briefing on the situation in Afghanistan and the vital role played by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) in supporting the Afghan national authorities. I also thank Mr. Yuri Fedotov, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for his briefing on the impact of drug trafficking and organized crime on the stability and development of that country.

The national perspective outlined by Ambassador Tanin was of very useful to us, and I thank him for his statement.

Despite the major challenges that persist, the latest report of the Secretary-General (S/2012/462) notes positive and encouraging developments in the security transition, human development and the building of institutional frameworks in Afghanistan. At the political level, the appointment of Mr. Salahuddin Rabbani as Chair of the High Peace Council, the approval of the Afghan Government by Parliament, the confirmation of Mr. Abdul Malek Kamawi to the Supreme Court, and efforts to strengthen the electoral framework are all significant and welcome developments.

At the regional level, we note the ongoing dynamic of cooperation and mutual confidence-building that was launched at the Istanbul conference and bolstered by such specific actions as the strategic partnership agreement between India and Afghanistan; the framework agreement between Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India on the transport of gas; the establishment of two working groups responsible for facilitating peace efforts; and, of course, agreed confidence-building measures. We welcome efforts to strengthen border security and the fight against drug trafficking, organized crime and illegal migration. These developments allow us to hope for a stable, reconciled and democratic Afghanistan enjoying the support of the international community.

Despite significant improvements in the security situation thanks to the launching of the third transition phase, ongoing targeted assassinations, the use of improvised explosive devices, and attacks on educational institutions by armed groups are a source of concern. In particular, given the trend — stressed earlier by Mr. Ladsous — of a fall in the number of incidents and a rise in the number of victims, we hope that an increase in the ranks of the national and local police, including by adding women, will help to reduce the number of innocent victims and lower the number of internally displaced persons and refugees.

The humanitarian situation, which is a direct consequence of the security situation, requires our full attention as it affects an extremely vulnerable and impoverished population. We regret the constant rise in the number of displaced persons. The situation requires the international community and humanitarian actors working in that country — to whom we pay

tribute — to deploy sustained efforts to continue to mitigate the suffering of the Afghan people.

Next month will see the holding of the Tokyo conference on Afghanistan. That meeting gives rise to great hope, not just for the Afghan people, but for the entire region. It will offer the opportunity to the international community as a whole to reaffirm its multidimensional commitment to bringing peace, stability and development to Afghanistan in order to prepare it to stand on its own two feet. We must ensure that the conference meets the expectations and requirements of the situation, as well as the aspirations of the Afghan people.

**Mr. Kandangha-Bariki** (Togo) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I should like to thank Mr. Hervé Ladsous and Mr. Yuri Fedotov for their briefings, which have the Security Council a good overview of the situation. I also wish to thank the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan for his statement.

On 20 March, the Council held a debate (see S/PV.6735) highlighting the remaining challenges in Afghanistan. Three months later, we are compelled to note that these challenges continue to monopolize our attention as we attempt to help that country to escape violence, insecurity and instability. The report of the Secretary-General (S/2012/462) shows that, generally speaking, the situation in Afghanistan remains precarious due to ongoing violence.

The bloody attacks that have taken place do not spare civilians or the defence and security forces. Political and religious leaders, too, continue to pay the price for these intimidation campaigns. The assassination on 13 May of a member of the High Peace Council speaks volumes about that climate of terror. Togo condemns such killings and all violence committed against women and children by anti-Government forces, who do not hesitate to also attack schools.

We deplore the aerial attacks undertaken by the coalition forces, which sometimes also claim civilian victims. These acts of violence naturally exacerbate the situation of asylum-seekers, refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons. The humanitarian operations launched to assist these people face restrictions or, in some cases, are simply suspended, whereas — as pointed out by Ms. Valerie Amos on 17 May — these populations require urgent humanitarian aid and assistance. My country firmly hopes that the new Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees, set out in Geneva in May, will help us to identify the measures and actions necessary to help Afghan refugees.

Despite the acts that I have referred to, which inspire bitterness and disapproval, we note a glimmer of hope, in particular in the peace process that has been launched among political actors. In that regard, we welcome the efforts of President Hamid Karzai to pursue the peace process. Although that process is currently experiencing difficulties due to diverging positions among the parties involved, we retain the hope that they will return to the negotiating table as soon as possible.

Togo therefore encourages them to pursue dialogue in order to restore peace and security to the country. We note the announcement made by the Afghan President that he will not stand as a candidate in the next presidential election. We urge him to adopt all measures necessary to a free and transparent election. In that respect, we welcome the positive role played by the Afghan Parliament in adopting relevant laws. We further welcome the support provided by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and all the United Nations agencies, particularly the United Nations Development Programme through its technical assistance to the Independent Electoral Commission.

The signing of a strategic partnership between the Presidents of Afghanistan and the United States on 1 May, the partnership agreements with Germany and Australia and the announcement that a partnership had been agreed with China add to our hopes in an already favourable regional context. Political dialogue and cooperation with the countries of the region are undergoing visible changes following the holding of various meeting, such as the Istanbul Conference for Afghanistan, the fifth Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan and the sixth trilateral meeting between Afghanistan, Pakistan and the United States. We welcome the ongoing efforts being made by Afghanistan's friends, alongside international organizations, to bring peace to the country.

Now that international forces have announced their final withdrawal for the end of 2014, we must call on Afghan authorities, the country's friends, States of the region and development and financial institutions to step up their cooperation in order to overcome the numerous obstacles that continue to hamper Afghanistan's development.

We have great hopes for the conference to be held in Tokyo on 8 July, which we believe will produce significant commitments with regard to financing the projects that will be presented at the meeting.

We once again reiterate our support to UNAMA and all of the United Nations agencies and programmes that, under very difficult conditions, continue to work to help bring peace, security and stability to Afghanistan.

**Mr. Mehdiyev** (Azerbaijan): I thank Under-Secretary-General Ladsous and Executive Director Fedotov for their briefings today. I also thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2012/462) on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security. I would also like to thank our colleague Ambassador Tanin for his statement.

The adoption of resolution 2041 (2012) by the Security Council in March and the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan mandate were a clear indication of the United Nations long-term commitment to the security, stability and prosperity of Afghanistan. The commitment of the international community to that goal was further solidified by the outcomes of series of international events, among which of particular significance was the Chicago summit of the Government of Afghanistan and the contributing nations of the International Security Assistance Force. The declaration on Afghanistan adopted at the summit marked an important milestone, reconfirming the continuation of close and robust international partnership with Afghanistan beyond the end of the transition period.

The Government of Afghanistan continues to make great progress towards the stabilization and development of the country. It is of paramount importance to keep the steady pace of progress attained so far, which requires an equal level of continued determination from both Afghanistan and its international partners. The conclusion of landmark strategic partnership agreements between Afghanistan and its bilateral partners will further reinforce individual commitments towards a stable, secure and prosperous Afghanistan.

We welcome the positive developments in the political realm in Afghanistan. The appointment of a new head of the High Peace Council will undoubtedly reinvigorate the work of that important body and will further contribute to taking forward a broad and inclusive peace process at the central and local levels. An inclusive Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process, in accordance with the Constitution of Afghanistan and with the support of the international community, is an essential element of overall stabilization and an absolute prerequisite for achieving durable peace in the country.

Although the overall security situation in the country remains precarious — with continued armed clashes, assassinations and suicide attacks by insurgents, which pose a serious threat to the overall peace and stabilization effort in Afghanistan — we nevertheless observe a decrease in a number of security incidents during the reporting period. Meanwhile, we also take positive note of the general progress and tranquillity in the areas undergoing the process of transition to full Afghan security responsibility.

Afghanistan's enhanced political dialogue and cooperation with its immediate neighbours and other regional counterparts on a broad spectrum of issues based on a common vision and mutual confidence is an imperative for the peaceful and stable future of the country and the region. We welcome Afghanistan's and its regional partners' continuous efforts and achievements in that regard.

That being said, we stress the particular importance of the decisions of the follow-up Heart of Asia ministerial conference held in Kabul on 14 June — on the establishment of annual high-level political consultations between Afghanistan and its near and extended neighbours concerning all issues of common interest, as well as on the implementation of confidence-building measures covering the areas of political and security and economic cooperation.

As the transition period continues towards the eventual withdrawal of international military forces and the assumption of overall security responsibility by Afghan authorities by the end of 2014, the scope and gravity of the security and development tasks that the Government of Afghanistan has to deal with are growing, and the need for the international community's enhanced support to the Government of Afghanistan is becoming even more vital.

Azerbaijan has for many years actively contributed to the international efforts in Afghanistan. My country joined ISAF almost at its beginning and has steadily increased its military contribution to it. We believe that capacity-building for Afghan institutions must remain at the heart of international assistance in order

to enable the Government of Afghanistan to exercise its sovereign authority in all its functions. At present, we are expanding our engagement in non-military spheres by contributing to the development of capacity-building in Afghanistan. We recently contributed €1 million to Afghanistan's National Army Foundation as part of our non-military engagement, and we have pledged additional financial support.

Azerbaijan has also decided to participate in the confidence-building measures on counter-terrorism, counter-narcotics, chambers of commerce, commercial opportunities, regional infrastructure and education. In addition, we have expressed our willingness to lead the implementation of the confidence-building measures on counter-narcotics and on regional infrastructure.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm my country's commitment to Afghanistan's sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity, and I reassure the Council of my Government's determination to remain an active contributor to collective efforts in Afghanistan.

**Mr. Churkin** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to Mr. Ladsous and Mr. Fedotov for their comprehensive briefings. We look forward to renewing the tradition of personal presentations by the heads of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and meetings of the Security Council. We reaffirm our support for the work of Mr. Jan Kubiš. We are also grateful to Ambassador Tanin for his interesting briefing.

Everything we have heard today serves to confirm that it is impossible to tackle the problems in Afghanistan solely with military means. We need to formulate a strategy of sustainable development for the country for the post-2014 period, as well as establish measures and international community for long-term stabilization, including in the socio-economic sphere. We look forward to substantive discussions on national and regional development programmes for Afghanistan during the Tokyo conference.

Russia is willing to participate in the rebuilding of the Salang tunnel and the nitrogen fertilizer factory and power plant in Mazar-e-Sharif, as well to build several hydro-power stations. Together with our Afghan partners, we have begun to modernize the Kabul house-building factory. One of the priority areas for our cooperation is to revive and develop Afghanistan's minerals and raw materials base. We believe that good examples of regional cooperation could include the project to create a system of CASA-1000 substations. Russia, without waiting for other potential partners to come forward, has announced its willingness to invest $500 million in that regard. We are also willing to help with the building of the TAPI pipeline.

Regardless of the form national reconciliation takes, a leading role must be played by the Afghans themselves. Dialogue with the armed opposition should be built upon the three well-known principles. The insurgents must renounce violence, recognize the Constitution and sever ties with Al-Qaida. We must not be tempted to weaken those principles in order to achieve dialogue. That would become counter-productive. We must effectively support the Security Council sanctions regime as a key counter-terrorism instrument.

We are concerned by the idea of replacing ISAF with another military presence in Afghanistan and in neighbouring States, as that could lead to additional instability. Any residual military presence should not counter the interests of Afghanistan's neighbours and other countries in the region. Full clarity is necessary in the possible planning of a new NATO operation in Afghanistan, including its mandate, strength and mission. Such an operation should be sanctioned by the Security Council, however, only after the ISAF mission reports to the Security Council on the implementation of its mandate. In that context, we view the participation of NATO representatives at our meeting today as NATO's recognition of that necessity.

Yet, we are forced to note that the reports we have received from Brussels tend to embellish the general picture. In order to understand what is necessary and what remains to be done in order to rectify the situation, we need an objective analysis — 2014 is almost upon us.

One of the most pressing problems is the illegal production, trade and trafficking of drugs in Afghanistan, which is a threat to international peace and stability. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), opiate production in the country in 2011 soared by 61 per cent and the surface area of poppy fields expanded by 7 per cent.

In that respect, a top priority — above all for the Afghan Government but also for the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) — is to destroy the poppy fields and infrastructure for the production of drugs. We are not convinced by the arguments against the practice of chemical destruction of drug crops,

which has been tried and tested in other parts of the world. Excessive lenience in combating the drug threat will not help to win the hearts and minds of ordinary Afghans, but will only win the hearts and minds of the drug barons who exploit them.

We must make full use of the experience of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) in intercepting drug trafficking and the related financing sources. Our proposal to forge counter-drug interaction between the CSTO and ISAF remains on the table. I recently met here in New York with a senior NATO official and was pleased to hear that NATO was open to pragmatic cooperation with the CSTO on that specific matter. We look forward to an official, positive response from NATO.

A good example of collective work was the 16 February ministerial conference in Vienna of the partners of the Paris Pact initiative on combating illicit trafficking in Afghan opiates. It guaranteed progressive development of the Paris-Moscow process, which is helping to shape a broad international coalition against the Afghan drug threat.

For our part, we are ready to continue assisting our Afghan friends in combating illicit drug trafficking, training personnel and equipping the counter-drug units, on a bilateral basis as well as through the United Nations and regional formats.

We see great potential in the implementation of the training programme for Afghan drug police at the all-Russian advanced training centre in Domodedovo. It was launched as part of a UNODC regional programme for Afghanistan and neighbouring countries based on concerns that despite the efforts of the Afghan authorities, supported by a sizeable foreign military contingent, extremists continued to actively operate throughout the country, gaining ground in regions where security responsibilities had been handed over to the Afghans.

In particular, we are concerned by the situation in northern Afghanistan, where, following counter-terrorist operations, terrorists are being flushed out, creating a direct threat to the security of our Central Asian partners from the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Instability in Afghanistan is significantly fuelled by the increasingly frequent cases of desecration and blatant war crimes committed by foreign troops, as well as cases of erroneous air strikes that lead to numerous civilian victims. We need to step up our efforts to prevent such incidents.

The drawdown of foreign troops should be offset by increasing the combat readiness of the Afghan army and police until they are in a position to fully guarantee their country's security. It would be unwise to establish an artificial timeline for a pull-out.

In such conditions, what is particularly relevant is the regional dimension of interaction when it comes to Afghanistan. We support the announcement on 14 June during the Kabul conference, of a channel for regional cooperation, including through the implementation of confidence-building measures.

The socio-economic recovery of Afghanistan is a top priority for us in that respect in the context of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the CSTO. We welcome the adoption, at the summit of SCO heads of State and Government held in Beijing on 6 and 7 June, of the decision to give Afghanistan observer status in the organization, which also provides it an opportunity to join in the work of the regional counter-terrorism structures and the practical implementation of the SCO counter-drugs strategy for 2011-2016.

**Mrs. Le Fraper du Hellen** (France) (*spoke in French*): I wish to thank Mr. Hervé Ladsous, Mr. Yuri Fedotov and Ambassador Tanin for their presentations.

I align myself with the statement to be made later on by the observer of the European Union.

The NATO Summit that was just held this past month in Chicago set a timetable for the development of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) as well as objectives for a professional, credible and sustainable Afghan security force. It endorsed the principle of creating a new NATO mission that will, starting 2015, be mandated to provide training, advice and assistance to the Afghan armed forces. I am pleased that Mr. Evans, of the NATO International Secretariat, will present his results to the Council today.

The regional process launched in Istanbul last November has been boosted by the ministerial meeting on 14 June in Kabul. At that time, France stated its interest in participating in the development of confidence-building measures aimed at the fight against drugs and terrorism as well as natural disaster mitigation. We are also ready to participate in a new meeting on the margins of the General Assembly in

New York, if the Afghan authorities believe that will be useful. Regional cooperation remains one of the keys to Afghanistan's future and, as a result, a priority for us all.

We thank Mr. Kubiš for his commitment in preparing the economic conference to be held on 8 July in Tokyo. The adoption of five new national priority programmes will help to advance the formulation of Afghan priorities. We hope that the conference will also define mutual commitments for the transformation decade, in particular with respect to the need for the Afghans to define a timetable and modalities for the next national elections. We hope that an agreement can be reached in establishing a cross-cutting anti-drug trafficking mechanism, which is one of the main challenges for Afghanistan, its neighbours and the international community as a whole.

France's actions are based on the framework defined by NATO in Lisbon and Chicago. Surobi and Kapisa, where our troops are deployed, form part of the second and third tranches of the transition process, which is now a reality for 75 per cent of the Afghans.

We will progressively scale down our military presence. Our combat mission will conclude at the end of the year, leaving on the front line the third brigade of the Afghan army, which has already shown its combat capabilities.

We will continue to help train the Afghan police and army as part of ISAF, until 2014. In addition, our actions will be based on the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation signed by the President of France and President Karzai in Paris on 27 January. The 2012-2016 action plan that is part of that agreement will be given substance by a significant increase in our civilian engagement in the areas of health care, education, agriculture, cultural exchange, mining resources and infrastructure. Naturally, we are committed to harmonizing such action with the priorities of the Afghan Government.

In Chicago, the Secretary-General reaffirmed that the United Nations would continue to support the Afghan Government. The United Nations will therefore play an important role in the context of the transition. The United Nations sanctions regime must continue to be used as a confidence-building measure in intra-Afghan reconciliation, rewarding those who have made the choice of peace and punishing those who want to pursue the path of violence.

We will consider, in that respect, requests for de-listing, listing and exemptions conveyed to the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011) by the Afghan Government. It is important, however, for the Government to take ownership of that instrument by proposing new entities for listing. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan will be increasingly at the heart of the efforts of the international community as it develops and moves towards a civilian-supported presence.

France endorses the three poles recently identified by the Secretariat as being at the heart of the Mission's work beyond 2014: political good offices; human rights, particularly the rights of women; and consistency of international aid. Proper cooperation with the funds and programmes remains key in terms of electoral reform, countering drug trafficking, supporting the Afghan police, the reintegration of insurgents and aid to refugees. On all these fronts, we are pleased to continue working with the United Nations as the central actor for the future of Afghanistan.

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): I shall now make a statement in my national capacity.

I thank Under-Secretary-General Ladsous and the Executive Director of United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Mr. Fedotov, for their briefings. I also thank the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, Ambassador Tanin, for his statement.

Thanks to the concerted efforts of the Government and people of Afghanistan, and with the support of the international community, recently there has been positive progress in the situation in Afghanistan. China supports continued adherence to the principle of Afghan-led and Afghan-owned activities in promoting the Kabul process so as to achieve lasting peace, stability and development.

I wish to stress the following points. First, China supports the reconciliation and reintegration process led by the Afghan Government and welcomes the appointment of the new Chair, Mr. Rabbani, to the High Peace Council. We hope that the relevant parties in Afghanistan will remain committed to an inclusive political dialogue and peace process so as to achieve national reconciliation. It is of vital importance that the next general election in Afghanistan be held smoothly. China welcomes the preparation carried out by the Afghan Government in that regard.

Secondly, China notes the recent decline in the number of security incidents in Afghanistan and the increased response capacity of the Afghan National Security Forces. We welcome the fact that the handover of security responsibilities from the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to the Afghan National Security Forces has entered the third tranche. At the same time, we hope that, in implementing the drawdown plans, the relevant parties will take into full consideration the need to maintain security and stability in Afghanistan, and that the drawdown will be carried out in a smooth and orderly manner.

Thirdly, we have witnessed incidents recently that have claimed heavy civilian casualties. We note that the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) has expressed its concern about the civilian casualties caused by air strikes. All parties to armed conflict should abide by international humanitarian law and relevant international law and fulfil their obligations to protect civilians.

Fourthly, narcotics are toxic to the reconstruction and peace process in Afghanistan. China appreciates the efforts of the Afghan Government in combating illicit drugs and welcomes the continued cooperation between UNODC and the Afghan authorities in support of the implementation of the country's national drug control plan.

Fifthly, the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan require the continued attention and support of the international community. The potential negative impact of the transition period on the country's economic and social development deserves our keen attention. China hopes that the recent spate of international conferences on Afghanistan will help to encourage the international community to make good on its commitments and to develop a long-term strategy to support Afghanistan.

Last but not least, China commends the United Nations for its role in facilitating the peaceful reconstruction of Afghanistan, and supports UNAMA's central coordinating role in facilitating the international community's assistance to the peaceful reconstruction of Afghanistan. We hope that UNAMA will continue to strengthen its communication, coordination and cooperation with the Afghan authority.

I shall now resume my functions as President of the Council.

Prior to giving the floor to the representatives of non-Council members, I wish to request that they limit their statements to no more than four minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously.

I now give the floor the representative of Australia.

**Mr. Quinlan** (Australia): I thank you, Mr. President, and Under-Secretary-General Ladsous, Executive Director Fedotov and our close colleague, Ambassador Tanin.

The year 2012 is proving, obviously, to be a major milestone for Afghanistan. The Chicago Summit's recommitment to Afghanistan was an unmistakable statement to the insurgency. The commitments to resourcing the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) after 2014 were significant, as was the agreement that NATO would lead a mission to train, advise and assist the ANSF, including Afghan special forces. Australia itself will contribute $100 million per year towards ANSF sustainability and provide training to the ANSF after 2014. We will consider a special forces contribution, with the agreement of the Afghan Government and under the right mandate. To underpin this long-term commitment, Afghan President Karzai and Australian Prime Minister Gillard signed a comprehensive long-term partnership in Chicago.

As the Secretary-General has highlighted, the insurgency continues to threaten peace and stability, but its momentum has been severely degraded and security conditions remain good in areas that have transitioned thus far. But as we know, to ensure security gains are properly sustained, we need to redouble our efforts to support Afghanistan's economic growth and development.

We support the Secretary-General's call for next month's Tokyo conference to deliver a very clear message that Afghanistan will not be abandoned in its social and development needs. We must identify those needs and the resources required and available to meet them. Clear financial commitments from international partners will be needed. To this end, Australia has committed to increasing its own development assistance from $165 million to $250 million per year.

As we know, the role of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) will become even more important as the transition process advances. Therefore, the cuts to UNAMA's budget, foreshadowed by the Secretary-General, will require

some hard, dexterous and creative reprioritization of UNAMA's efforts, but its core mission to support and underpin successful, enduring transition in Afghanistan must be preserved. We encourage UNAMA to consult closely with international partners on arrangements for its ongoing presence.

Successful presidential and parliamentary elections in 2014 and 2015 are, of course, indispensable for future stability in Afghanistan. But clarity about the future political process is needed quickly to ensure that the necessary planning and preparations can begin. We welcome the assurance in the Secretary-General's report (S/2012/462) that the United Nations will remain an active partner in coordinating international assistance in the next round of elections, and we look forward to ongoing close cooperation among UNAMA, the Afghan authorities and the international community, including ourselves, in support of credible and inclusive electoral processes.

Reconciliation and reintegration have a long way to go, but the insurgents need to understand that there is no alternative to them. UNAMA's own support for peace and reconciliation efforts remains important. Reconciliation is obviously a complex and protracted process, but we know that lasting stability in Afghanistan can be achieved only through dialogue and Afghan-led processes of reconciliation and reintegration.

We commend the Secretary-General for highlighting the important role that women can and should play in shaping positive outcomes. Gender issues remain decisive for a successful Afghanistan, and we expect that they will be central to much of the discussion at the Tokyo conference.

In concluding, as we are all aware, Afghanistan will become stable only if a secure external environment is achieved. The Heart of Asia process, including the recent Kabul ministerial conference, is foundational to achieving this goal, and we commend the leadership of Turkey in particular in this process.

The implementation of the confidence-building measures from the Kabul ministerial conference will be a significant next step. Australia has committed to supporting the Heart of Asia countries in implementing such measures for education and commercial opportunities. We also thank Kazakhstan for its offer to host the next ministerial meeting in the first half of 2013.

To conclude, my own Government is determined to continue working with the Afghan Government and people, and our other partners in the international community, in support of a goal that, as we have all said and know, is in everybody's interests — a secure and stable Afghanistan whose Government, institutions and economy are on an irreversible path to long-term and sustainable development.

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Japan.

**Mr. Kodama** (Japan): I thank Under-Secretary-General Ladsous and the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Mr. Fedotov, for their comprehensive and informative briefings. I would also like to express my respect and gratitude to all the men and women of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) who have demonstrated such deep commitment to this difficult mission. And I thank Ambassador Tanin for his statement.

We applaud the recent positive developments in the area of security in Afghanistan, such as the launch of the third tranche of transition, and we are pleased with the progress of the two initial rounds, which will bring 75 per cent of the country's population into the process. We are also pleased that the number of former anti-Government personnel enrolled in the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme has grown to 4,641, according to the Secretary-General's report (S/2012/462). Japan also welcomes the appointment of Mr. Salahuddin Rabbani as the new Chair of the High Peace Council.

Unfortunately, we have also witnessed several shocking incidents over the last quarter, such as the large-scale insurgent attack on 15 April, which affected several Government institutions and foreign missions, including the Japanese embassy, and the assassination of senior High Peace Council member Mawlawi Arsala Rahmani on 13 May. While such deplorable incidents show that grave security challenges remain, they have also been witness to the ability of the Afghan National Security Forces and have strengthened our resolve to stop the cycle of violence and ensure that such tragedies never occur again.

With that transition process and security situation in mind, our most predominant and demanding task is proving to the international community that Afghanistan will be stable and self-reliant in the future, particularly

beyond 2015. In order to achieve this, it is incumbent on both Afghanistan and its international partners to tackle the related challenges of advancing both security and sustainable development in the country. In that regard, we view this year's series of key high-level meetings, in particular the NATO Summit on security held in Chicago in May, the ministerial conference on regional cooperation held in Kabul in June, and the Tokyo conference on sustainable economic development, to be held in July, as momentous factors in the shaping of Afghanistan's future.

The NATO Summit in Chicago, together with the new strategic partnership agreement between Afghanistan and the United States, made important steps forward in terms of ensuring the constancy and predictability of the security situation in the country. Japan is also determined to continue its assistance to the Afghan National Police so as to improve it both qualitatively and quantitatively. Along with improving its security situation, it is essential for Afghanistan to work with its neighbours in order to achieve lasting stability and prosperity. Japan therefore supports the Istanbul process, launched in November, and recognizes the outcome of the Kabul ministerial conference held on 14 June.

Japan welcomes Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's attendance at the Tokyo conference as a sign of the consistent commitment of the United Nations to Afghanistan's stability and sustainable development. Building on the outcomes of the NATO Summit and the Kabul ministerial conference on regional cooperation, the Tokyo conference on Afghanistan on 8 July will focus on a sustainable development strategy for Afghanistan, and will discuss the coordination of international economic assistance, the Afghan Government's commitment to improving governance, and a follow-up mechanism. We will aim to reaffirm the historic partnership between the international community and the Government of Afghanistan, from transition to the transformation decade of 2015-2024, based on the concept of mutual accountability.

That notion of mutual accountability is at the very heart of our partnership. The Government seeks long-term assistance from the international community to enable it to become self-reliant in the future. In order to achieve such self-reliance, the Government must achieve a wide range of reforms in governance that will assure the international community that its assistance will be utilized in an appropriate and transparent way.

The necessary reforms are in a variety of fields; they include holding free and fair elections, combating corruption, establishing the rule of law and achieving better public financial management. In that regard, we would like to express our gratitude for the leading role that UNAMA has taken in this challenging area, as well as its efforts as a coordinator between the Afghan Government and international donors.

Japan has also actively supported the Government in these areas through its contributions to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other United Nations agencies' country programmes. Furthermore, we recently made the decision to contribute an additional $8.6 million to the second phase of the UNDP technical assistance project, Enhancing Legal and Electoral Capacity for Tomorrow, aimed at enhancing the functions of the Independent Election Commission regarding the presidential election of 2014, which will be critically important to the Government's legitimacy.

In the same spirit, Japan is ready to continue its assistance to Afghanistan in a responsible manner and encourages international partners to continue to deliver predictable financial support for the country. I would like to reiterate once again that the concept of mutual accountability is the key to the future prosperity of Afghanistan, based on a firm and lasting partnership with the international community.

With the drawdown of international troops bringing civilian agencies increasingly to the fore, UNAMA's leadership and coordination of efforts to achieve both sustainable peace and reconciliation and economic and social development in Afghanistan will only grow in importance. We would like to once again express our commitment to supporting UNAMA's efforts, and to pledge to work closely with the mission, the Government and other international partners for Afghanistan's lasting stability and development.

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the observer of the European Union.

**Mr. Mayr-Harting**: I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The acceding country Croatia; the candidate countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Iceland and Serbia; the country of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina; the European Free Trade Association country Norway, member of the European Economic

Area; as well as Ukraine and Armenia, align themselves with this statement.

Like others, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report (S/2012/462) and Under-Secretary-General Ladsous for his important briefing. I also thank the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and Ambassador Tanin for their statements.

It is important that the international community take a holistic view of its post-2014 engagement in Afghanistan, given the correlation between security and long-term development. The recent conferences held in Chicago and Kabul have been instrumental in that regard. They have refined and further developed the relationship between the international community and the Afghan Government. In the same vein, the upcoming Tokyo conference should focus on reviewing and renewing mutual commitments by the international community and the Afghan Government. I will briefly touch on the topics addressed at both conferences and then look ahead to Tokyo.

The NATO Summit in Chicago laid out plans for sustaining and developing the Afghan National Security Forces. At that Summit, the European Union stressed the importance of the Afghan National Police refocusing on civilian policing and on supporting the rule of law. Fair and impartial policing is essential if justice and human rights, especially those of women and children, are to be promoted. We therefore announce that the European Union is happy to increase its police funding by 20 per cent from the EU budget over the period 2011-2013, and also that the EU plans to make an enhanced contribution post-2014.

The recent ministerial conference in Kabul highlighted the important role that the countries of the region must play in supporting conflict resolution, better security and development in Afghanistan. We therefore welcome the agreement reached in Kabul on confidence-building measures to further regional cooperation.

Acknowledging that regional initiatives must be regionally owned and led, the EU stands ready to support such measures. The European Union has considerable experience and knowledge on how to advance regional cooperation.

The upcoming Tokyo conference will provide an excellent opportunity for the Afghan Government to set out its development strategy for the country. The European Union is ready to make an enhanced contribution to support for Afghanistan. However, that must be in the context of the Afghan Government fulfilling the commitments of the Kabul and Bonn conferences, as well as those in the mutual accountability framework, to be agreed in Tokyo.

Inter alia, that means, first of all, the peaceful transfer of power in 2014 as a result of inclusive, credible and transparent presidential and parliamentary elections. Secondly, further progress on the management of public finances — in particular the implementation of the International Monetary Fund recommendations — is required. Thirdly, domestic revenue collection needs to be increased through the development of more efficient, transparent and accountable customs and tax systems. Fourthly, guaranteed respect for human rights, in particular of women and children, including the support of an independent and active civil society, must be ensured. Fifthly, there must be reform of the justice sector to promote the rule of law.

Without tangible progress in those five areas, it will be difficult for donors to maintain their support to the Government of Afghanistan. Donors also need to make good on their commitments. The European Union will press for a better coordination of donor support and a better alignment between the Afghan Government and donors on priorities. We will also actively promote a better use of international mechanisms, all, of course, in close coordination with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

Finally, it is essential that all resources made available be transparently and accountably managed. With regard to the latter, we are pleased to note that the United Nations Development Programme reacted promptly to the alleged accusations of mismanagement at the Law and Order Trust Fund by launching a full investigation. We await the conclusions of that investigation, the outcome of which will be important as regards our envisaged financial support for the Afghan National Police. Let me underline that that is an issue that we take very seriously.

In conclusion, the outcomes of the conferences will structure the international long-term engagement in Afghanistan beyond the end of the transition through the transformation decade, as agreed to in Bonn last year. As we move beyond transition, the United Nations has an essential role to play. UNAMA should

have the resources and the political support needed to assume that role. Its work will be of key importance in supporting the preparations for the upcoming elections, in monitoring the human rights and humanitarian situation, and in making such coordination bodies as the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board work more effectively.

The aim of our overall strategy in Afghanistan remains clear: to support Afghanistan on its path towards becoming a more peaceful, democratic and prosperous society.

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Turkey.

**Mr. Apakan** (Turkey): Let me begin by thanking Under-Secretary-General Hervé Ladsous for his comprehensive briefing on the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan (S/2012/462). I would also like to thank the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Executive Director Yuri Fedotov for his briefing and Ambassador Tanin for his insightful statement.

Afghanistan has come a long way. We have seen with satisfaction the Afghan National Security Forces growing stronger to assume the security responsibility for almost 75 per cent of the population. The Afghan National Security Forces have improved in terms of capacity and professionalism. They have proved able to maintain security in those areas where they have assumed the lead. By mid-2013, they will be providing the lead for security across the country. That will mark the shift of the primary focus of the International Security Assistance Force from combat operations to training, advising and assisting. That clearly demonstrates that Afghanistan is on its way to sustainable self-reliance in the security sector. In Chicago, we gave the Afghan people the clear message of commitment that we would stand by them as they took the full lead for their security.

In our shared determination for a stable and secure Afghanistan, we have relentlessly supported the Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace and reconciliation process. We therefore welcome the appointment of Mr. Rabbani as Chair of the High Peace Council, and we strongly support his emphasis on a broad-based and inclusive peace process at the central and local levels. We are confident that, under his able leadership, the High Peace Council will successfully lead a comprehensive and genuinely inclusive peace process.

There are many dimensions of our cooperation in Afghanistan that we could discuss. Indeed, today, many speakers touched upon various issues. However, I would like to limit my intervention to the regional dimension of our joint endeavours.

Since last November, Afghanistan's immediate and more distant regional partners have embarked upon positive and constructive regional cooperation, with a view to ensuring a secure, prosperous and peaceful Afghanistan. Combined Afghan leadership and regional ownership are key drivers of the Istanbul process. We are indeed encouraged by our region's commitment to engaging in sincere and results-oriented cooperation for a peaceful and stable Afghanistan.

Two weeks ago, the Kabul ministerial conference on the Istanbul process was a clear testimony to our collective resolution in that regard. Our region is bound in its destiny. We will enjoy peace, security and prosperity only if Afghanistan, which plays a crucial role as the land bridge in the heart of Asia, enjoys peace and stability. As such, we believe that the positive energy mobilized through the Istanbul process will enhance existing efforts for a stable and prosperous region.

The Istanbul process has three main elements that we believe are important to emphasize. The first element is to enhance political dialogue among the region. Recognizing that regular political consultations at a high level is the most effective way of ensuring continuous dialogue, the Istanbul process participants committed themselves to meeting once a year for political consultations at the ministerial level. Such political momentum will be further enhanced through regular meetings of our senior officials, as well as our Kabul-based representatives.

The second element is to implement the confidence-building measures. Seven such measures, which are prioritized on common challenges such as disasters, terrorism, illicit drugs, impediments to trade and economic growth, and illiteracy, will be incrementally implemented by the participant countries. Within that framework, we are encouraged that a meeting will be held in New Delhi tomorrow to bring together regional and international investors in Afghanistan. That will be an opportunity for investors in all sectors to exchange views on Afghanistan's economic potential.

The third element is to build synergy among regional organizations. From the very beginning of the Istanbul process, we made clear our keen interest in developing greater coherence and in creating a better synergy with the existing regional cooperation processes pertaining to Afghanistan. In that respect, we are pleased that a significant number of those organizations were represented at the highest level in Kabul. We will continue to collaborate with them within that framework.

We would also like to commend the significant and constructive support and contribution that the United Nations has provided to the Istanbul process. Together, we have demonstrated our firm resolve for a successful future in Afghanistan.

Afghans have a clear vision for their future — a sovereign, secure and peaceful State that is economically self-sufficient. That vision is also very much related to Afghanistan's crucial role and regional and historical position in promoting connectivity and cooperation across its wider region. As Afghanistan's regional and international partners, we should continue to support Afghans in achieving their vision. To that end, Afghan ownership and leadership will be at the centre of our collective efforts.

Looking ahead, the upcoming Tokyo conference, which will be graciously hosted by Japan, will be an important opportunity for the Afghan Government to share its development strategy beyond the transition period. In Tokyo, the international community should reaffirm its continued support to Afghanistan's sustainable economic development.

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge our strong support for the significant role played by the United Nations in Afghanistan. The United Nations should continue to be a strong partner for Afghanistan in the Afghan-led peace and transition processes. I would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to Special Representative of the Secretary-General Jan Kubiš and his team for their dedicated efforts.

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of New Zealand.

**Mr. McLay** (New Zealand): We thank Under-Secretary-General Ladsous and Ambassadors Tanin and Fedotov for their briefings.

Although we welcome recent developments in Afghanistan, which give room for cautious optimism, we remain mindful that it continues to face many serious challenges. For example, while there is an encouraging trend of fewer civilian casualties overall, we are particularly concerned by the increasing trend towards deliberately targeting civilians.

Like others, we applaud the outcomes of last month's NATO-International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Summit in Chicago, which highlighted the clear progress and reconfirmed the commitment of ISAF contributors to the transition strategy and to the future of Afghanistan. New Zealand continues to play its part. We will provide trainers to the Afghan National Army Officer Academy from 2013 and contribute financial support for the Afghan National Security Forces from 2015, targeted at rule-of-law initiatives in Bamyan province. We will also provide ongoing development assistance to Afghanistan, focused especially on Bamyan.

The work to train and sustain the Afghan National Security Forces is vital. We are pleased that we will be able to continue contributing to that endeavour after the end of the ISAF mission. In that regard, we especially support the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, as it highlights the importance of a distinct civilian role for the police. We welcome the Ministry of Interior's national police plan, prioritizing community-based policing, strengthening crime detection and prevention, safeguarding human rights and combating violence against women and children. Recent experiences in Bamyan suggest that this work will be vital to ensuring local populations develop the necessary trust and respect for their police force. We also take this opportunity to recognize the United Nations important work in advocating for accountability mechanisms within the Afghan security forces.

The forthcoming Tokyo conference will provide — as many others have noted — another opportunity for the international community to make different kinds of commitments to Afghanistan's long-term sustainability. Over the past decade, the international community has invested much in Afghanistan. We now hope that, at Tokyo, Afghanistan itself will be able to make its own commitments to ensuring that the international community can continue to invest in the country's future.

We are pleased that Bamyan is on track to complete transition later this year. There will nonetheless continue to be a role for the New Zealand provincial

reconstruction team in the months following the transition. That role will include the final stages of mentoring the provincial quick reaction force, securing the substantive completion of development projects, and supporting local authorities as they lead the province into its post-transition future.

The New Zealand provincial reconstruction teams will then complete its work in Bamyan and withdraw before the end of 2013, thus modeling the full life cycle of the transition process, while also fulfilling our commitment to the people of Bamyan. We are, however, keenly aware that the many serious challenges still facing Afghanistan must not be understated or underplayed. We therefore confirm our commitment to continuing to work with Afghanistan, its international partners and the United Nations in meeting these challenges together.

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to Mr. Evans.

**Mr. Evans**: I thank you, Mr. President, for this opportunity to address the Security Council and to present a few remarks on the situation in Afghanistan and prospects for the future from the perspective of NATO.

The first point I wish to make is that the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) is operating under Security Council authorization and to fulfil United Nations purposes. NATO's decisions in relation to ISAF are based on that fundamental principle. In NATO's quarterly reports to the Security Council, the latest of which was submitted by the NATO Secretary General on 31 May, we set out in detail the issues of interest to the Security Council. Our conclusions on the security situation are consistent with those of the United Nations. There has been a marked reduction in the number of security incidents in the first half of this year, compared to 2011, and the Afghan National Security Forces have made substantial progress in terms of numbers and quality. ISAF has integrated into its structures and operations the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security, and taken measures on the protection of children from the damaging effects of armed conflict.

Last month, on 21 May, the NATO Summit in Chicago dedicated a full session to Afghanistan. It was attended by all 50 contributors to the ISAF mission, President Karzai, President Zardari and representatives of Russia, Central Asian States and Japan. The United Nations Secretary-General participated, as did the European Union. The presence of States involved in regional processes was a sign of their significance not only to the ISAF operation but also to the broader international effort to stabilize Afghanistan.

Allow me to sum up the key points of the Chicago summit. First, we assessed progress on the transition of security to Afghan responsibility. With the third tranche of transition starting now in Afghanistan, Afghan soldiers and police will be taking the lead for the security of 75 per cent of the population within the next few months. The Afghan National Security Forces are on schedule to take full responsibility for security by the end of 2014, and that is when we will complete our ISAF mission.

The Summit also looked beyond the end of the ISAF mission. At the international conference on Afghanistan in Bonn in December 2011, the international community recognized that Afghanistan would continue to need strong support and help after 2014. Against that background, at Chicago, NATO, along with our ISAF partners, confirmed that we will see our ISAF mission through and that we will then begin a new mission after 2014 to train, advise and assist the Afghan security forces. The Afghan Government reaffirmed NATO's crucial role beyond 2014 and invited NATO to continue its support.

Finally, Chicago provided the opportunity for NATO allies and partners to confirm their broader support to Afghanistan and assistance to the Afghan National Security Forces after 2014. Chicago was not a pledging conference, but a number of allies and partners came forward with significant commitments of financial support both before and at the summit. Financing the Afghan national security forces is not a responsibility for NATO members and ISAF contributors alone. Nevertheless, Chicago added significant momentum to international efforts to secure the necessary financial support for the Afghan National Security Forces after the ISAF mission has ended.

The Afghan Government was closely consulted in the preparation of the Summit. President Karzai restated in Chicago the commitment of the Afghan authorities to face up to the challenges of good governance and promote human rights. As noted in the Chicago joint declaration issued with the Government of Afghanistan, continued progress on governance and human rights

would encourage ISAF contributors to further provide their support up to 2014 and beyond.

We have studied the Secretary-General's latest report (S/2012/462) and we note his concerns on civilian casualties. I have also taken note of Under-Secretary Ladsous's comments on that point today. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that 85 per cent of civilian casualties in 2012 have been caused by anti-Government elements. The reductions in the number attributable to ISAF and to the Afghan National Security Forces are well documented. We have seen a reduction of some 70 per cent from 1 February to 30 April 2012 compared with the same period in 2011.

As the NATO Secretary General has emphasized publicly, any civilian casualty is one too many. ISAF efforts to reduce civilian casualties are continuous and rigorous. We are also working very closely with the Afghan National Security Forces to strengthen their ability to prevent civilian casualties.

In conclusion, we have a clear strategy for completing the transition of full security responsibility to the Afghan National Security Forces by 31 December 2014. We are starting the process of planning our new mission to train, advise and assist those Afghan forces after 2014. More generally, NATO recognizes that its contribution to the stability of Afghanistan is just part of a much wider effort by the Afghans themselves, and by the international community, to tackle the broad spectrum of security, governance and development challenges faced by Afghanistan. In that context, much depends on the continued close cooperation between the United Nations and NATO, and specifically between the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and ISAF. It is only by working together in the spirit of the comprehensive approach that we can achieve in Afghanistan the aims which are set out clearly in Security Council resolutions and which meet the aspirations of the Afghan people.

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Canada.

**Mr. Rivard** (Canada): It has been a busy winter and spring for Afghanistan. Today's debate in the Security Council comes on the heels of a series of key high-level meetings over the past months that have included discussions on the future of the international community's engagement in Afghanistan beyond the end of the transition period. In Bonn, Camp David and Chicago, the Government of Afghanistan and the international community made significant progress in mobilizing continued support for Afghanistan and recognized the concept of mutual accountability. Canada is confident that the 8 July Tokyo conference will allow us to build on that progress, ensuring that Afghanistan undertakes the required reforms and has the support needed to successfully implement its development agenda for self-reliance, prosperity and stability during the remaining phases of the transition period and into the transformation decade.

Canada has been and will remain a committed partner in Afghanistan. As stated by Prime Minister Stephen Harper at the NATO Summit, Canada will continue its current training mission through to March 2014, with a view to ensuring that the Afghan National Security Forces are well trained and can assume full responsibility for their country's national security.

To help ensure a secure future for Afghanistan beyond 2014 and to build on the gains made thus far, the Prime Minister also announced in Chicago that Canada will provide $110 million per year over three years beginning in 2015 to help sustain the Afghan National Security Forces to provide security and stability in a sovereign and democratic Afghanistan.

As we prepare for Tokyo, Canada acknowledges the efforts of the Government of Afghanistan in the development of its "Supporting self-reliance in Afghanistan" strategy. The national strategic vision for the transformation decade focuses on the main development challenges in Afghanistan and, as such, provides both Afghan Government officials and donors a common framework for supporting an Afghan-owned development process. In developing that framework further, Canada recommends that greater emphasis be placed on essential services, such as health and education, and on the particular needs associated with the ongoing humanitarian challenges in Afghanistan.

Furthermore, we look forward to working with our partners to ensure that the Tokyo conference becomes a milestone in defining civilian support for Afghanistan beyond 2014. In doing so, a clear and credible mutual accountability framework will be required if the continued efforts of the Government of Afghanistan and the international community towards long-term stability in the country are to be successful and sustainable. Timely endorsement of well-sequenced national priority programmes ready for implementation with clear deliverables, concrete progress towards the

International Monetary Fund's programme benchmarks and increased capacity of the Afghan Government to absorb, manage and execute budget financing are pivotal in that regard.

Canada remains hopeful that the Government of Afghanistan's concerted efforts in defining its self-reliance strategy denote a strong commitment to addressing the Government issues that have seriously undermined development in the country. Reducing corruption, strengthening judicial institutions, increasing the meaningful participation of women and conducting elections that meet international standards all remain as key transition indicators. It is essential that the elections in 2014 and 2015 demonstrate improved integrity, inclusiveness and sustainability and lead to an orderly transfer of power that is viewed as legitimate by the wider Afghan public. To make that a reality, Afghanistan must undertake needed electoral reform on the basis of a broad consensus among political parties, civil society and other stakeholders.

The situation of Afghan women and girls also deserves our unwavering attention. Canada believes that the success of the transformation decade must be judged by the extent to which women contribute to security, stability and inclusive economic development in Afghanistan. In that regard, it is imperative that we build upon the principle established at this year's Group of Eight summit which recognized that political stability, democratic governance and economic growth cannot be sustained without according full and equal opportunities to both men and women and the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom to practice religion. The advancement of women and girls in Afghanistan and the protection and promotion of their human rights remains a priority for Canada. Our ongoing civilian programming aimed at improving infant and maternal health, girls' education and women's literacy and women's increased access to and participation in Afghan justice and electoral systems reflect that priority. Canada will also continue to play a key role in coordinating with Governmental and civil society organizations, including women's organizations and networks, to promote greater coordination and strengthen advocacy for sustainable change.

As the third tranche of the security transition has recently been announced, we must remain vigilant as to the impact of the security transition on women and girls, and work to address the threat of sexual and gender-specific violence. In doing so, all parties must live up to our common commitment to take into consideration the different experiences of women and men in conflict and in fragile States, promote the meaningful participation of women in peace and security, and take special measures to protect women and girls in armed conflict, as outlined in resolution 1325 (2000).

(*spoke in French*)

The recent announcement by President Karzai of the third tranche of the transition is another indicator of the growing capacity of the Afghan National Security Forces to assume greater responsibility in terms of the security of their country. In recent months, the security forces have proved by their actions that their leadership and capacities are developing swiftly, in particular during the attacks by insurgents in Kabul on 15 and 16 April.

National political reconciliation remains central to lasting peace in Afghanistan. Canada remains hopeful that progress will be made in the peace process on the basis of broad societal reconciliation, transitional justice and respect for the Bonn principles.

Canada remains supportive of Afghan-led efforts to reach out to those who renounce violence, have no links with Al-Qaida or other terrorist organizations and respect the Afghan Constitution. Moreover, Afghan reconciliation cannot be considered in isolation from regional dynamics. In that respect, Canada is heartened by the progress made in recent months towards greater regional cooperation, notably through the Istanbul process.

At the Kabul ministerial conference held earlier this month, Canada welcomed the continued efforts of the Heart of Asia countries in moving forward with a regionally led process that features concrete, cooperative measures aimed at addressing common security and economic challenges. Canada stands ready to support the implementation of the process and its related confidence-building measures, including through our ongoing facilitation of the Afghanistan-Pakistan cooperation process.

In moving forward with its regional and international partners, Canada's ultimate goal remains to sustain the gains that have been made as a result of the sacrifices of Canadian, Afghan and international troops, and to help the Afghan people rebuild a viable society that is better

governed, more stable and more secure, and that will never again be a safe haven for terrorists.

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Latvia.

**Ms. Freimane-Deksne** (Latvia): Latvia aligns itself with the statement of the European Union and would like to make a few remarks in its national capacity.

First of all, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2012/462), Mr. Ladsous and Mr. Fedotov for their briefings, and Special Representative Ján Kubiš and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) team for their professional and dedicated work. The efforts of the United Nations in coordinating and ensuring international support for Afghanistan in the years to come will be of particular importance.

Latvia reaffirms its long-term commitment to supporting Afghanistan in its efforts to undertake the remaining transition challenges entailing the assumption of leadership responsibility by the Afghan Government. Those challenges will continue to require a coordinated approach between the international community and the Afghan Government. Moreover, there should also be a coordinated approach among the various international players, whose efforts should be complementary. In that regard, the conferences in Bonn and Kabul, the Chicago Summit and the upcoming conference in Tokyo, as well as regional meetings at different levels, are of particular importance. In order to ensure greater United Nations coherence in Afghanistan, Latvia welcomes the first meeting, held in May, between the Afghan Government and all 27 United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, and expresses its hope that this forum for ongoing dialogue will be maintained.

Latvia believes that efficient regional cooperation is an important factor in achieving the long-term political and economic stability of Afghanistan. Confidence-building between Afghanistan and all of its direct and more distant neighbours is necessary for the overall stability and development of the region and should be supported by the international community. In particular, we consider that the Central Asian countries have an important role in contributing to the stability and security of Afghanistan and the whole region, and that they should be closely involved in the efforts of the international community in that respect.

Transnational threats such as terrorism and drug trafficking endanger Afghanistan's security and the growth of a legitimate economy, as well as regional and international peace and security. Border security and drug-trafficking issues require the development of cooperation between neighbouring countries, and Latvia encourages the countries of the region to enhance cooperation in that regard. For its part, Latvia is providing a continuous financial contribution to the NATO-Russia project, implemented in cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), to train counter-narcotics personnel in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Central Asia. We also welcome the launch of the UNODC Afghanistan country programme for 2012-2014 in May of this year.

Latvia believes that it is important to look at the long-term economic perspective for Afghanistan, including enhancing its development as a transportation and transit hub in the region. In order to contribute to common efforts in that regard, Latvia hosted an international workshop this May, in Riga, on the possible transformation of the northern distribution network into a commercial transit route. The workshop was attended by more than 150 high-level Government officials, foreign-policy experts and representatives of transport and logistics companies from 30 countries, including from Central Asia. During the workshop, Latvia also pledged its support for training Afghan rail and civil aviation experts, an incentive that was welcomed by the delegation of Afghanistan.

That incentive supplements Latvia's continuous involvement in civil projects in Afghanistan, including those related to the promotion of the rights, participation and economic empowerment of women. Women play a vital role in the peace process, as recognized in resolution 1325 (2000), and they should also be involved in the development and implementation of post-conflict strategies, in order to ensure that their interests are taken into account.

Let me once again reiterate Latvia's commitment to remaining an active and reliable partner in the efforts of the international community towards a stable, secure and prosperous Afghanistan in a stable and prosperous region.

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

**Mr. Khazaee** (Islamic Republic of Iran): Since I am the last speaker and, as it is lunchtime, I will shorten my statement; the full statement will be circulated.

Let me start by expressing our gratitude to Under-Secretary-General Ladsous, as well as Mr. Fedotov, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), for their briefings today.

Afghanistan still faces some important challenges that could derail the country's stabilization and development, and harm regional and international security. Terrorism, violence, extremism and narcotic-drug production and trafficking are among the major threats that Afghanistan faces. But one important issue for the region and in the area of the relationship between Afghanistan and its neighbours is the presence of foreign forces in the country. that presence has provided a major security concern over the past decade for neighbouring countries and the region as a whole.

In analysing the situation on the ground, we believe that the long-term international engagement in Afghanistan should not lead to a long-term presence or permanent foreign military bases or a military and security presence in Afghanistan. The longer foreign forces are present, the longer disability will endure. Of course, the Afghan authorities have assured their neighbours that such a long- term presence will not be a security concern for its neighbours. Nevertheless, in our case, at least, we have experienced incidents such as the drone transgression into our airspace, and, obviously, security considerations are a matter that cannot compromised on.

Another area of ongoing concern is drug production and traffic. In his statement today, Mr. Fedotov noted that Afghanistan produces 90 per cent of the world's opiates. The narcotic drugs originating from Afghanistan affect not only neighboring countries but also other countries far away from the region. This menace has hindered the advancement of the affected countries towards development and has put at risk their social cohesion.

At the national level, the Islamic Republic of Iran has taken sweeping measures to counter drug trafficking. On the basis of that approach, the Islamic Republic of Iran has mobilized 30,000 military troops and law enforcement personnel along the joint borders with Afghanistan and Pakistan. We have also reinforced and re-managed the fortifications, facilities and intelligence control systems in transit and border checkpoints in order to prevent the entry of trafficking caravans into the country, and annihilate them in case of infiltration. More than 400 kilometres of embankments along the borders, 800 kilometres of deep canals, 90 kilometres of concrete walls, 20 kilometres of barriers and 140 kilometres of barbed wire fencing are just some of the control and security measures taken by the Islamic Republic of Iran along its eastern borders. That area was visited by Mr. Fedotov during his trip to Iran in July 2011.

In order for our fight against narcotic drugs to be effective, there is a need to review regional and international policies and programmes in order to overcome shortfalls and effectively counter them in dealing with such a global problem as narcotics. The Islamic Republic of Iran once more emphasizes its strong determination to combat this significant global problem and expresses its readiness to cooperate with others to decisively resolve such problems of global concern.

Regarding regional cooperation and the Tokyo conference, both of which we fully support, my full statement will be circulated among my colleagues.

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): We have heard the last speaker for this meeting. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

*The meeting rose at 1.45 p.m.*

United Nations S/PV.6794

# Security Council

Sixty-seventh year

*Provisional*

**6794**th meeting
Friday, 29 June 2012, 9.30 a.m.
New York

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *President:* | Mr. Wang Min | (China) |
| *Members:* | Azerbaijan | Mr. Sharifov |
| | Colombia | Mr. Alzate |
| | France | Mr. Briens |
| | Germany | Mr. Wittig |
| | Guatemala | Mr. Rosenthal |
| | India | Mr. Kumar |
| | Morocco | Mr. Loulichki |
| | Pakistan | Mr. Tarar |
| | Portugal | Mr. Vaz Patto |
| | Russian Federation | Mr. Zhdanov |
| | South Africa | Mr. Laher |
| | Togo | Mr. Kandangha-Bariki |
| | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | Mr. Clarke |
| | United States of America | Mr. DeLaurentis |

## Agenda

International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January 1994 and 31 December 1994

Letter dated 22 May 2012 from the President of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2012/349)

Letter dated 1 June 2012 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2012/392)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506.

12-39295 (E)

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*The meeting was called to order at 9.40 a.m.*

**Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

**International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January 1994 and 31 December 1994**

**Letter dated 22 May 2012 from the President of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2012/349)**

**Letter dated 1 June 2012 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2012/392)**

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2012/491, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Guatemala.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

*A vote was taken by show of hands.*

*In favour:*

Azerbaijan, China, Colombia, France, Germany, Guatemala, India, Morocco, Pakistan, Portugal, Russian Federation, South Africa, Togo, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2054 (2012).

The Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

*The meeting rose at 9.45 a.m.*

United Nations S/PV.6795

# Security Council

Sixty-seventh year

*Provisional*

**6795**th meeting
Friday, 29 June 2012, 9.45 a.m.
New York

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *President*: | Mr. Wang Min | (China) |
| *Members*: | Azerbaijan | Mr. Sharifov |
| | Colombia | Mr. Alzate |
| | France | Mr. Briens |
| | Germany | Mr. Wittig |
| | Guatemala | Mr. Rosenthal |
| | India | Mr. Kumar |
| | Morocco | Mr. Loulichki |
| | Pakistan | Mr. Tarar |
| | Portugal | Mr. Vaz Patto |
| | Russian Federation | Mr. Zhukov |
| | South Africa | Mr. Laher |
| | Togo | Mr. Kandangha-Bariki |
| | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | Mr. Parham |
| | United States of America | Mrs. DiCarlo |

## Agenda

Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506.

12-39654 (E)

Please recycle

*The meeting was called to order at 9.45 a.m.*

**Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

**Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction**

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2012/501, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by France, Germany, South Africa, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

*A vote was taken by show of hands.*

*In favour:*

Azerbaijan, China, Colombia, France, Germany, Guatemala, India, Morocco, Pakistan, Portugal, Russian Federation, South Africa, Togo, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2055 (2012).

I now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

**Mr. Rosenthal** (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): Guatemala appreciates the work of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) and its Group of Experts. We believe that they have done important and useful work since their establishment to promote the heightened efforts of the international community to combat the dangers and threats posed by nuclear proliferation. We consider it important that such efforts continue.

We also value the role played by the Group of Experts of the 1540 Committee. Without the support provided by the experts to Member States, and to developing countries in particular, it would be difficult for many to establish plans of action, present national reports and make progress on the measures necessary to comply with the provisions of resolution 1540 (2004).

We believe that it is necessary to respect the criteria for selecting the experts, as established under resolution 1977 (2011), as they meet the legitimate interests of the international community to have at its disposal, in addition to the most qualified people, a group that is diverse and reflects a balance of representation among its members. The criteria on which the selection of experts is based are an important factor for ensuring that the 1540 Committee maintains its legitimacy.

In that regard, we should have preferred the criteria to be respected in the selection of the members of the Group of Experts referred to in resolution 2055 (2012), which we have just adopted, without additional budgetary implications beyond those already foreseen. It was only on the basis of our desire not to see the work of the 1540 Committee affected that we joined the consensus on this occasion, despite our reservations concerning the final composition of the Group of Experts.

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): There are no further speakers inscribed on my list.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

*The meeting rose at 9.50 a.m.*

United Nations S/PV.6796

# Security Council

Sixty-seventh year

*Provisional*

**6796**th meeting
Friday, 29 June 2012, 9.50 a.m.
New York

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *President:* | Mr. Wang Min | (China) |
| *Members:* | Azerbaijan | Mr. Sharifov |
| | Colombia | Mr. Alzate |
| | France | Mr. Briens |
| | Germany | Mr. Wittig |
| | Guatemala | Mr. Rosenthal |
| | India | Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri |
| | Morocco | Mr. Loulichki |
| | Pakistan | Mr. Tarar |
| | Portugal | Mr. Cabral |
| | Russian Federation | Mr. Zhukov |
| | South Africa | Mr. Mashabane |
| | Togo | Mr. Kandangha-Bariki |
| | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | Mr. Parham |
| | United States of America | Mr. DeLaurentis |

## Agenda

Central African region

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation of children and armed conflict affected by the Lord's Resistance Army (S/2012/365)

Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa and on the Lord's Resistance Army-affected areas (S/2012/421)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506.

12-39660 (E)

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*The meeting was called to order at 9.50 a.m.*

**Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

**Central African region**

**Report of the Secretary-General on the situation of children and armed conflict affected by the Lord's Resistance Army (S/2012/365)**

**Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa and on the Lord's Resistance Army-affected areas(S/2012/421)**

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of the Central African Republic to participate in this meeting.

Under rule 39 of the Council's rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Abou Moussa, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa, to participate in this meeting.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Ambassador Francisco Caetano José Madeira, Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on Lord's Resistance Army Issues, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2012/421, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa and on the Lord's Resistance Army-affected areas, as well as document S/2012/365, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation of children and armed conflict affected by the Lord's Resistance Army.

I wish also to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2012/481, which contains a letter from the Secretary-General dated 25 June 2012 addressed to the President of the Security Council and transmitting the regional strategy to address the threat and impact of the activities of the Lord's Resistance Army pursuant to Security Council presidential statement S/PRST/2011/21.

I now give the floor to Mr. Moussa.

**Mr. Moussa** (*spoke in French*): Allow me to thank you, Mr. President, for this opportunity to present to the Security Council the second report (S/2012/421) of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), including the efforts undertaken by the Organization to combat the Lord's Resistance Army. Given the fact that Ambassador Madeira, Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on Lord's Resistance Army Issues, is with us today, my statement on this issue fill focus essentially on the United Nations regional strategy to address this scourge.

For more than a year now, UNOCA has been working in close cooperation with the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), its member States and other partners in an effort to overcome various challenges faced by the subregion in the areas of peace, security and development. Those challenges include political governance, institutional weakness, managing electoral processes, environmental degradation, socio-economic development, the consequences of the Libyan crisis, combating the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons, and the cross-border threats posed by armed groups such as Boko Haram and the Lord's Resistance Army. Thanks to the experience we have gained on the ground, we have been able to identify priority areas for UNOCA-ECCAS engagement that will guide our efforts in the subregion.

(*spoke in English*)

As the secretariat of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, we have also successfully facilitated the functioning of that Committee, including the convening of two ministerial meetings. Moving forward, we will help the Committee to implement the counter-terrorism road map that it adopted last December. We will also support the Committee's twentieth anniversary celebrations.

UNOCA, together with the United Nations Office for West Africa, has been actively engaged in facilitating the implementation of resolution 2039 (2012), on piracy and armed robbery in the Gulf of Guinea, in close collaboration with ECCAS, the Economic Community of West African States, the Gulf of Guinea Commission and the African Union. Together, and as requested by this body, we are working towards the holding of a regional summit before the end of the year.

The subregion has rich reserves of natural resources. However, the effective management of those resources and their judicious exploitation for the benefit of the majority of the populations remains a major challenge. A most encouraging development in the subregion is the current healthy state of the economies of the countries of Central Africa, with a reported average growth rate of more than 5 per cent in 2011. In spite of that good news, there are indications that, partly due to shortcomings in economic governance, the benefits of that growth at the macroeconomic level are yet to trickle down to the level of the vast majority of the population.

During his visit to the subregion last February, the Secretary-General highlighted the necessity of bridging the widening gaps between the rich and the poor in some Central African states. He urged Governments to "do more to strengthen the social fabric by promoting social equity and ensuring a better distribution of income" and better prospects for sustainable growth, peace and prosperity.

On 14 November 2011, I briefed the Council (see S/PV.6657) on the tremendous suffering that the most brutal criminal group in Central Africa, the LRA, was inflicting on the local population. For over two decades, this group has maimed, killed, kidnapped women and children, and caused the displacement of more than 445,000 people. Following my briefing, at the end of its meeting the Council adopted presidential statement S/PRST/2011/21, in which it encouraged UNOCA, in coordination with the United Nations Office to the African Union, to engage with the United Nations presences in the LRA-affected region and the AU to develop a regional strategy to address the threat posed by the LRA. In that regard, we consulted extensively with the Governments in the affected countries, national and regional actors and the wider international community to develop a coordinated strategy.

The strategy, which has been submitted to the Council, focuses on five key objectives. They include, first, support for the operationalization and full implementation of the African Union regional cooperation initiative against the LRA; secondly, enhancing efforts to promote the protection of civilians; thirdly, expanding disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration (DDRRR) activities to cover all LRA-affected areas; fourthly, promoting a coordinated humanitarian and child protection response in all LRA-affected areas and; lastly, supporting LRA-affected Governments in the fields of peacebuilding, human rights, the rule of law and development, so as to enable them to extend State authority across their territories. Once the strategy is endorsed, the United Nations and its partners will need to agree on its implementation plan.

The strategy goes beyond military operations and DDRRR. It addresses the plight of the victims to ensure their social and economic reintegration into their respective communities. However, the strategy must only represent the beginning of vigorous attention by the Council to address the LRA issues, in order to put an end to these atrocities once and for all. Its successful implementation will depend on the level of cooperation and engagement among the countries affected, and on the mobilization of resources to address funding gaps.

In spite of the recent capture of one of its senior commanders and its significantly diminished capability, the LRA remains extremely dangerous and retains the capacity to inflict considerable suffering on the population. In that regard, I appeal to the Security Council and the wider international community to actively support the implementation of the United Nations regional strategy and the AU Regional Cooperation Initiative. It is also imperative to ensure that the LRA's source of funding is investigated.

UNOCA is committed to continuing to support the countries of the subregion in their efforts to foster peace and security. In that regard, UNOCA will continue to support subregional initiatives to address the major challenges to peace and security in Central Africa, in particular the implementation of the regional strategy on the LRA, measures to curb the threat posed by piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea, and support to the activities of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa.

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Moussa for his statement.

I now give the floor to Mr. Madeira.

**Mr. Madeira**: I greet the Security Council on behalf of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Mr. Jean Ping, and wish to thank the United Nations, particularly the Security Council and the Secretary-General, for their continued commitment to supporting the African Union and other international efforts aimed at eliminating the threat of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). I also wish to express our

gratitude for the concrete United Nations support being channeled through its missions, the United Nations Mission in South Sudan and the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO); its offices — the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), the United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU) and the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic; and humanitarian agencies in order to respond to the threat of the LRA and its impact on the countries affected, particularly the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Republic of South Sudan. That support has effectively enhanced implementation of the African Union-led Regional Cooperation Initiative for the elimination of the Lord's Resistance Army.

I wish to stress that although successive military operations have largely disabled the LRA command, the rebels' ability to commit atrocities against civilians has remained undiminished. The 11 June report of the Secretary-General on the activities of UNOCA and on areas affected by the LRA (S/2012/421) accurately depicts the current situation vis-à-vis the LRA. However, I wish to underline the efforts made so far by some key partners of the African Union in the fight against the LRA.

The ongoing United States-backed military operations, especially in the Central African Republic, have sustained pressure on the LRA, keeping the rebels constantly on the run. Those operations contributed to the capture by Ugandan troops on 12 May of the self-styled Major General Caesar Acellam Otto, a one-time number four in the LRA command hierarchy; the capture by Central African Republic troops on 22 May of two LRA combatants; and the killing on 16 June of two other LRA combatants by Ugandan troops, who also rescued seven civilians who had been abducted. Furthermore, MONUSCO, the United States Government and various non-governmental organizations are supporting these actions with psychological operations in the form of come-home radio messages and air-dropped leaflets in local languages, aimed at encouraging mass defections by LRA elements. When it becomes fully operational, the African Union-led Regional Cooperation Initiative is expected to bolster those efforts, particularly through military operations, so as to heighten pressure on the LRA, leading to more captures, surrenders, defections and the eventual elimination of the entire group.

At this juncture, allow me to acknowledge the enormous support and commitment the European Union has demonstrated towards the Regional Cooperation Initiative on the LRA. The European Union has been providing funds to support the African Union (AU) efforts to eliminate the LRA since 2010.

This meeting gives me the opportunity to apprise the Council of some key issues concerning the Regional Cooperation Initiative on the LRA. The first ministerial meeting of the joint coordination mechanism on the LRA, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 8 May, adopted concrete measures and made important decisions on the next steps to be taken in implementing the African Union-led Regional Cooperation Initiative. They include the full operationalization of the regional task force headquarters and the three sectors; coordination between the task force and the United Nations missions and offices on the ground; and the convening of a support forum to mobilize resources for the Cooperation Initiative. In addition, the 321st meeting of the AU Peace and Security Council, held in Addis Ababa on 22 May, extended authorization for the implementation of the Initiative for 12 months.

The major objectives of the African Union-led Initiative are strengthening the capacity of the affected countries to effectively respond to and neutralize the LRA threat; facilitating the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the affected communities and creating an environment conducive to the stabilization and rehabilitation of the affected areas. Those objectives, particularly the latter two — relating to humanitarian assistance, the protection of civilians, support to former combatants for disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration, and the long-term recovery needs of those affected — resonate with those of the United Nations system on the ground and have thus been well articulated in the comprehensive regional strategy on the LRA.

The key components and structures of the initiative are the joint coordination mechanism — an ad hoc political body composed of the Ministers of Defence of the four LRA-affected countries, with a secretariat in Bangui and chaired by the African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security — whose task is dealing with the general political aspects, providing strategic direction and coordinating with all stakeholders in the fight against the LRA; a 5,000-strong force with its headquarters in Yambio, South Sudan; and three operational sectors, in Nzara in South Sudan, Dungu in

the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Obo in the Central African Republic.

Regarding the status of the implementation of the Regional Cooperation Initiative, we can state that since the authorization in November 2011 of the African Union-led Initiative by the African Union Peace and Security Council, the following efforts have been accomplished.

The command and control architecture of the regional task force, which had not been upon decided and thus remained a potential impediment to operations, was adopted on 8 May at the first ministerial meeting of the Joint Coordination Mechanism. The regional task force headquarters has been fully staffed with 30 officers, including a civilian humanitarian adviser, a civilian human rights adviser and a police officer to provide advice on the rule of law and ensure that the activities of our soldiers in the LRA-affected areas and their interaction with the affected communities and LRA elements are conducted in strict respect of human rights and the rule of law. They have all undergone induction.

A joint team comprising military officers from the African Union regional task force headquarters, the UNOAU, the European Union and the United States of America are currently conducting a technical assessment mission in the sectors to evaluate their capabilities, challenges and needs for effective operations. The process for the adoption of major technical support documents, notably standard operating procedures, rules of engagement, common measures on the treatment of LRA combatants and victims, and policy on civilian protection are on track.

On the political and diplomatic front, I have undertaken jointly with my colleague the Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa, Mr. Abou Moussa, to encourage the missions to engage the leadership of the LRA-affected countries to maintain their commitment or, where necessary, urge them to renew cooperation on the LRA issue.

At the sidelines of those missions, we have often engaged representatives of cooperating international partners to galvanize international support for the regional cooperation initiative against LRA. We also undertook a joint mission to N'Djamena in April, within our strategic objective of seeking the diplomatic support of the neighbours of the LRA-affected countries to block the possible escape of the LRA members into new areas in those countries. Consultations are ongoing with authorities of the Republic of the Sudan for a similar mission to Khartoum.

The effective implementation of the African Union-led initiative is, however, being undermined by certain critical challenges, for which we appeal for international support. Those challenges include predictability of financial and material resources and logistical support for the Joint Coordination Mechanism secretariat and the Office of the Special Envoy for the LRA Issue, the regional task force headquarters operations and the operational units tracking the LRA in the respective sectors.

The operational units require concrete support in terms of appropriate training, harmonized communication systems, food rations, medical support, air and ground mobility, munitions, fuel and lubricants, inter alia, to enable them to undertake robust military operations against the LRA so as to induce defections or the surrender and capture of LRA combatants as well as the rescue of LRA abductees.

I wish to inform the Security Council that, on 22 November 2011, the African Union Peace and Security Council declared the LRA a terrorist organization and requested the Security Council to do likewise. I take this opportunity to formally request the Security Council, through you, Mr. President, to consider the request of the African Union Peace and Security Council and declare the LRA a terrorist organization. I also wish to echo the African Union Peace and Security Council request of 22 May 2012 to the Security Council to consider modalities for enhancing its support to the African Union-led international efforts, inter alia, by adjusting the mandates of the United Nations peacekeeping missions in the LRA-affected countries. In that regard, I wish to reiterate the need to make available an air mobility network within the three sectors.

I wish to appeal further to the Security Council for support for resources to mitigate the aforementioned challenges to the effective functioning of the Joint Coordination Mechanism secretariat and Office of the African Union Special Envoy for the LRA Issue in Bangui, operations of the regional task force/joint operations centre headquarters in Yambio as well as the sector headquarters and their operational units in Nzara, Dungu and Obo.

We applaud the continued political engagement of the United States on the LRA issue, particularly for having deployed the approximately 100 military personnel to the region in October 2011 to provide logistical assistance, planning and intelligence. We thank the European Union for the substantial and sustained support to the African Union-led regional cooperation initiative against LRA. That support has proven to be essential in the operationalization of the different structures of the initiative. We also recognize and appreciate the efforts of the Members of Parliament of the United Kingdom who debated the LRA issue and urged their Government to do everything in its power to arrest Kony. We welcome those efforts and request more from other States Members of the United Nations, so as to further enhance the current global momentum against Kony and the LRA. In that regard, I urge the Security Council to help us deny the LRA any external sources of support, including safe haven for their sympathizers who continue to issue statements from the diaspora in support of the terrorist group.

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Ambassador Madeira for his statement.

I shall now give the floor to the members of the Security Council.

**Mr. Parham** (United Kingdom): I thank you, Mr. President, for scheduling today's important meeting of the Security Council. Let me begin also by thanking Special Representative of the Secretary-General Abou Moussa for his briefing and for the valuable contribution that he makes to peace and security in the Central African region. I also wish to thank the Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on Lord's Resistance Army Issues, Ambassador Madeira, for his very helpful briefing this morning. His presence here today is a demonstration of the strong coordination between the United Nations and the African Union on that important topic. The United Kingdom encourages the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) to continue to coordinate the work of the United Nations, the African Union and the States affected by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) to counter the LRA threat.

As Mr. Moussa and Ambassador Madeira have just reminded us, the LRA remains an unprincipled and violent threat to civilians across Central Africa. The atrocities it commits have serious humanitarian and human rights consequences. Council members and Special Representative Abou Moussa heard graphic accounts of those atrocities in an Arria-formula meeting last week with some of those directly involved in working with the victims.

The United Kingdom condemns in the strongest terms the LRA's continued violations of international law and human rights law. The LRA's campaign has the potential to cause further instability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Republic of South Sudan and the Central African Republic, and to hamper the efforts of those countries to progress towards peace and security. Removing the threat of the LRA is important in terms of creating and consolidating a secure and stable environment in the affected countries.

The release of the United Nations regional strategy on the Lord's Resistance Army is a welcome step towards achieving that aim. The international community must now ensure that there is an appropriate and coordinated international response to the problem. We need a unified response from the LRA-affected countries, the African Union and the United Nations political, development, humanitarian and peacekeeping missions in those countries.

In that regard, the United Kingdom welcomes the work that the African Union has undertaken towards the implementation of its regional task force, about which we have just heard from Ambassador Madeira. The United Kingdom urges the full deployment of troops across the region as soon as possible.

The United Nations regional strategy must now be implemented fully and quickly. I encourage UNOCA to develop a costed implementation plan for the strategy, outlining priority actions and articulating the results that will be achieved. It is important as soon as possible to identify and explain to the broader donor community the resource gaps.

The United Kingdom also commends the important work of the United Nations peacekeeping missions in protecting civilians. Continued and improved coordination and information-sharing between these missions and with other stakeholders will further enhance these efforts. This is why the United Kingdom has supported an increase in the capacity of the information cell in northern Democratic Republic of the Congo, which will improve information exchange between the missions.

I am pleased to see that important work such as the successful demobilization, disarmament, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration programme is being expanded across the entire LRA-affected region. I urge the United Nations to deliver consistent levels of support for this programme across the region and to assess and respond to recent changes in amnesty laws in the region as far as they affect the programme.

I now turn to UNOCA's wider role in other security issues across Central Africa. The United Kingdom remains concerned about the increased levels of instability in the region. I welcome the enhanced regional collaboration to counter these threats, and would encourage expansion and intensification of this cooperation. UNOCA will have an important role to play in supporting upstream conflict prevention by pre-empting tensions in the region and mediating between parties.

The United Kingdom also recognizes the leadership that the United Nations is showing on maritime security and the positive role played by Central African States. A coordinated regional response is important in this area too. In this regard, we welcome the Economic Community of Central African States and Economic Community of West African States maritime security memorandum of understanding. Regional dialogue should cover issues beyond just piracy and include illegal fishing, illegal oil bunkering, weapons, people and narcotics trafficking.

Lastly, I thank Council members for their support for the draft presidential statement that the United Kingdom delegation has prepared and that you, Sir, will shortly issue on the Council's behalf.

**Mr. Mashabane** (South Africa): We thank your delegation, Mr. President, for facilitating this discussion today. My delegation would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Abou Moussa, for his comprehensive briefing on the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). We also thank the Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on LRA issues, Ambassador Francisco Madeira, for his useful briefing to the Council.

Regarding the situation in Central Africa, we are pleased with the continued efforts of the political leadership of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) to address the threats affecting their subregion, as witnessed at the summit meeting held in January. South Africa commends the excellent economic growth rates registered by the countries of the region despite the current difficult economic and financial climate. This notwithstanding, efforts must be employed to ensure that this growth translates into poverty alleviation and benefits the majority of the vulnerable and marginalized communities.

We remain convinced that economic development and security are mutually reinforcing, and we therefore commend the work of UNOCA in supporting States of the region in strengthening conflict prevention and peacebuilding and countering cross-border threats. We particularly commend the countries of the region for conducting their elections in a peaceful manner. As noted by the Secretary-General (S/2012/421), the concern remains that elections-related violence could be a source of instability in the absence of transparent, legal, participatory and inclusive processes.

We are equally concerned about the impact of insecurity in the Sahel in the follow-up to the Libyan crisis on peace, stability and socio-economic development in the Central African region. The proliferation of weapons and the spread of transnational organized crime and terrorist groups continue to pose a threat to the security of the region. Equally worrisome in this regard are reports that Boko Haram is now operating beyond the borders of Nigeria.

My delegation is pleased with the high level of cooperation taking place between UNOCA and the United Nations Office for West Africa, as well as other United Nations presences in the region, in addressing the common security and socio-economic challenges of the subregion. The lessons learned could enhance greater effectiveness and efficiency of both regional presences. This collaboration has also extended to other regional bodies such as ECCAS, the Economic Community of West African States and the Commission of the Gulf of Guinea to address maritime security challenges facing the region.

UNOCA has an important mandate in working with the United Nations peacekeeping missions in the affected areas, the United Nations Office to the African Union and the African Union (AU) to facilitate cooperation in countering the threat posed by the LRA. Collaboration with the relevant regional and subregional organizations is of paramount importance. Over the past year, the United Nations and

the AU have undertaken a number of joint initiatives, including visits to countries affected by LRA activities. These collaborative approaches have assisted the two organizations in strengthening the international resolve to combat the scourge of the LRA.

The activities of the LRA remain a serious threat to peace, security and stability in the region, with grave humanitarian consequences. South Africa is concerned about the devastating effects of this armed group and its continued activities in a number of African countries, including the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda, South Sudan and the Central African Republic. The brutality of these activities continues to haunt thousands of innocent civilians, including women and children, and has resulted in massive displacements of people and an acute humanitarian crisis.

The African Union has declared the LRA a terrorist organization, and accordingly the Security Council has had to deal with the LRA as such. South Africa commends the ongoing military cooperation between the countries affected by LRA activities in addressing this challenge.

In this regard, my delegation welcomes the official launching of the African Union-led Regional Cooperation Initiative against the LRA on 24 March, including a joint coordination mechanism, a regional task force and a joint operations centre. The Initiative will, inter alia, strengthen the operational capabilities of the countries affected by the atrocities of the LRA and facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid to affected States. Ambassador Madeira has elaborated on the modalities of the Initiative. It will be vital for the international community to provide all necessary support to the Initiative, particularly in logistical, financial and technical terms, so as to facilitate the effective functioning of the different components of the Initiative and build the capacity of the armed and security forces of the affected countries.

We reaffirm that military action against the LRA should be conducted in a manner that seeks to minimize injury to civilians, and be in compliance with the applicable international law, including international humanitarian, human rights and refugee law. South Africa wishes to underscore that these military operations should be part of a broader strategy that should include the granting of amnesty, policies for facilitating defections and reintegrations, and arrests of LRA commanders indicted by the International Criminal Court. In this regard, we welcome the arrest of a senior commander of the LRA, Caesar Acellam Otto.

Finally, my delegation wishes to express its appreciation for the work done by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Abou Moussa, and his team, and we wish him well in his ongoing endeavours. If UNOCA is to be able to implement all its plans and programmes for the region, it is important that it be allocated the resources it needs.

My delegation supports the draft presidential statement that will be adopted by the Council shortly.

**Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri** (India): At the outset, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this meeting to discuss the activities of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), particularly in the context of the threat posed by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). I would also like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Abou Moussa, and Ambassador Madeira for their briefings.

We have taken note of the Secretary-General's report (S/2012/421) on UNOCA and the LRA and on a regional strategy for the LRA-affected areas.

The countries of Central Africa are making steady progress in overcoming the negative effects of decades of instability and conflict. The region has seen overall political stability. Timely elections have been held in several countries, which have further strengthened democratic institutions. Countries are pursuing economic reform, which has resulted in robust economic growth in the region. They are also cooperating with regional and foreign partners in addressing their common challenges, such as the proliferation of weapons, transnational organized crime and terrorism. The African Union and the Economic Community of Central African States have also continued to play a crucial role in addressing these problems in partnership with UNOCA and the United Nations Office to the African Union.

Despite those positive trends, the countries of the region continue to grapple with the effects of conflicts of the past. Overall socio-economic indicators still remain poor and the precarious security and humanitarian situation in the Sahel is adversely impacting on the region. Activities of terrorist groups such as Boko Haram, armed groups and transnational

crime networks, illicit drug trafficking, and maritime piracy and robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea continue to threaten the security and stability of the region.

It is in this context that the activities of UNOCA assume significance, particularly in the areas of conflict prevention, early warning and addressing socio-economic challenges. We commend UNOCA and the Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa, Mr. Abou Moussa, for their active engagement with national Governments and with regional and subregional organizations. UNOCA should further strengthen that collaboration and assist the efforts of Governments and organizations in the region so that regional cooperative frameworks developed to deal with those common challenges are fully implemented.

The focus of the Council should lead to galvanizing the international community to provide adequate resources for the national and regional endeavours, particularly in strengthening national capacities with regard to civil administration, police and security forces, security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes and socio-economic development. Given the fragility of political institutions in several countries, it is also important for national and regional authorities to pay attention to the need for inclusive political processes, including electoral reforms.

Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea is a major threat to maritime navigation, trade and economic activities in several countries in Central and Western Africa. We have noted the progress made towards a coordinated approach to address the problem, including the establishment of a multinational coordination centre for maritime safety and security in Equatorial Guinea. We hope that the proposed summit-level meeting will be held soon to work out a regional strategy.

It is a matter of serious concern that the LRA activities have increased this year, particularly in the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The LRA remains a potent threat and its criminal activities have uprooted over 445,000 persons from their communities in the Central African region, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan and Uganda. While countries like Uganda, with support from regional and foreign partners, have undertaken a number of measures to address the challenge posed by the LRA, a lot remains to be done. In that connection, we have taken note of UNOCA's efforts and the launch of the African Union-led regional cooperation initiative against the LRA earlier this year. We hope that the African Union will continue to work closely with the affected countries so that the regional task force may be expeditiously deployed in the three identified sectors.

We agree with the Secretary-General's view that any effective strategy on the LRA should focus on strengthening the capacity of national authorities, including their security forces, to expand the authority of the State, and focus on overall socio-economic development in the affected areas. International humanitarian, development and peacebuilding assistance to the LRA-affected areas should address the underlying causes for activities of armed groups. The national programmes for disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration activities should be supported with the provision of adequate resources and be reinforced by a long-term plan for employment generation among the affected communities. It is also important that serious efforts be made to eliminate the remaining active groups and target the leadership of the LRA to bring them to justice. External assistance to the affected countries should be apolitical in nature and respect national sovereignty in policy as well as operational matters.

In that connection, it is important that United Nations missions in the region should not be burdened further without augmentation of their resources in manpower and material. Without a commensurate increase in resources, the expansion of mission mandates will not result in operational effectiveness.

In conclusion, India stands ready to contribute to efforts to address the challenges of the countries of the Central African region, particularly in the fields of capacity-building and human resource and socio-economic development.

**Mr. Loulichki** (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this debate. We were fortunately prepared for it by the Arria-formula meeting held last week at the initiative of Portugal and the United Kingdom.

I would also like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa, Mr. Abou Moussa, and the Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on Lord's Resistance

Army Issues, Ambassador Francisco Caetano José Madeira, for their very thorough briefings.

Morocco welcomes the important gains achieved by the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), which have come barely one year after its effective launching, in the areas of coordination and cooperation between States and organizations of the subregion, but also between the United Nations agencies and missions. Based on our belief that only effective and united regional cooperation will provide lasting responses to the challenges facing the Central African countries, we commend the strengthening of cooperation between the UNOCA, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the secretariat of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region. The support for strengthening subregional institutions must continue to be a priority for UNOCA.

With regard to the fight against transnational organized crime, the security challenges from the Sahel region, and the phenomenon of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, Morocco commends the efforts of UNOCA to help to establish regional responses to those challenges via strengthened cross-regional and interregional cooperation. We specifically welcome the cooperation established between the UNOCA and the United Nations Office for West Africa and the commitment to work together to counter the common threats affecting the security and stability of those two regions.

With regard to piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, we commend the efforts of the Office to facilitate, on the one hand, the holding of the regional summit on piracy in the Gulf of Guinea scheduled for December and, on the other hand, the cooperation between the ECCAS, ECOWAS and the Gulf of Guinea Commission. Morocco supports the efforts of the regional Office and is prepared to contribute to any initiative aimed at curbing the current security threats to Central Africa via our support to countries of the region and in the framework of the ministerial conference of the African States bordering the Atlantic Ocean.

Despite the positive gains made to counter the activities of the Lord's Resistance Army, that group continues to destabilize and destroy the lives of thousands of children, women and men throughout the Central African region. We continue to believe that the close cooperation of States in the region and the determined mobilization of the international community will ultimately thwart the LRA's destabilization strategy while complying with international humanitarian law.

In that context, we would like to commend the mobilization of UNOCA to provide effective regional cooperation at the governmental level, at the level of international and non-governmental organizations, and also in terms of civil society. The protection of civilians must continue to be at the centre of any effort undertaken against the LRA, and measures such as strengthening and expanding the regional radios stations throughout the four countries affected by the LRA should be encouraged. The success of the process of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and resettlement or repatriation and national reconciliation and the prosecution of persons responsible for such crimes should also continue to be one of the priorities of countries of the region and of the entire international community.

We took note with great interest of the regional strategy crafted by the United Nations to respond to the threat posed by, and the impact of the activities of, the LRA. We took note in particular of the five pillars for strategic action, and we noted with interest the importance attached to the issue of the social and economic development of the affected countries, which is a prerequisite for the promotion of peace and stability in the subregion.

To that end, Morocco will continue to cooperate with the States of the region, specifically the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in key areas of human development, including health, education, agriculture and professional training.

Lastly, my country is pleased to contribute, by means of a large contingent within the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to helping to protect civilians and ensure the delivery of humanitarian assistance and the provision of medical services.

I should like, before concluding, to commend the outstanding work undertaken by Mr. Abou Moussa, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and his team and to assure them of our full support as they carry out their mission. We also unreservedly support the draft presidential statement prepared by the delegation of the United Kingdom.

**Mr. Sharifov** (Azerbaijan): I should like at the outset to thank the presidency for having convened

this very important debate. We also thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Abou Moussa, and the African Union (AU) Special Envoy, Mr. Madeira, for their comprehensive briefings.

We welcome the positive developments registered in the region during the reporting period, especially the conduct of peaceful elections, economic growth and efforts to promote regional integration and cooperation. However, cross-border threats, the flow of illegal arms and the activities of armed groups and terrorist organizations, especially Boko Haram, the increase in piracy and armed robbery in the Gulf of Guinea, poverty and trafficking in persons continue to raise concerns.

Incidents of piracy and armed robbery in the Gulf of Guinea have risen significantly in recent times, so that the area has the second most acute piracy problem on the African continent. The increasing number of piracy attacks, in addition to transnational organized crime, including the trafficking of illicit weapons, constitute a serious threat to peace, security and economic development in both the coastal and hinterland States of the region.

The measures and initiatives undertaken at the national and regional levels to mobilize international attention to this problem and enhance maritime safety and security in the Gulf of Guinea should be commended.

Insecurity in the Sahel region continues to have a significant negative economic and social impact on a number of Central African countries, and more consistency and determination are needed in addressing those potential and actual risks and threats.

We are also deeply concerned by the atrocities committed by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), which continue to pose a threat to regional security and stability. The LRA bears responsibility for grave violations against civilians, including killing, maiming, abductions, sexual slavery, rape and the recruitment and use of children, as well as the displacement of 445,000 people. We note the work of the United Nations agencies, in particular the World Food Programme and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, in providing humanitarian assistance to this vulnerable group.

We welcome the development of the United Nations regional strategy on the LRA, with the contribution of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa, and the launching of the African Union-led regional cooperation initiative. It should be noted that the necessary funding is essential for the implementation of both the strategy and the initiative.

At the same time, we would stress the importance of further strengthening cooperation among all LRA-affected countries, in particular through the Regional Task Force, to address those common regional threats. We take positive note in this regard of the agreement reached on information-sharing between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda this March.

The recent decrease in the number of LRA attacks brought about an improvement in the regional security situation. In the context of that approach, State authority, as well as disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration activities, should be further strengthened in the LRA-affected areas. Moreover, various programmes to reduce poverty and create job opportunities should be implemented by the respective Governments, with donor assistance. The reintegration into society of the displaced persons, LRA abductees and former combatants is also very important.

Even successful national efforts cannot bring about overall normalcy and ensure a comprehensive solution if they are not supported by the United Nations system and the broader international community. Therefore the initiatives undertaken by the Governments of the affected countries, as well as the efforts of the African Union and other relevant regional and subregional organizations, should be forcefully supported.

**Mr. Cabral** (Portugal): I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this meeting on this very important subject. I would like to start by thanking Special Representative of the Secretary-General Abou Moussa for the very comprehensive briefings on the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and on United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA). I also want to thank the Special Envoy of the African Union for the LRA issue, Ambassador Francisco Madeira, for his very important statement to the Council.

The LRA continues to pose a serious threat to civilians in four affected countries. We remain concerned by the fact that attacks against civilians in LRA-affected areas were again on the rise in early 2012 and that more than 445,000 people are internally

displaced or living as refugees as a result of LRA activities.

Portugal strongly condemns the continued violations by the LRA of international humanitarian law and human rights law, including the recruitment and use of children, killing and maiming, rape, sexual violence and abductions. We strongly urge the LRA to put an end to those practices, to release all abducted persons and to disarm, demobilize and surrender. We also encourage all States to cooperate in order to implement the International Criminal Court arrest warrants for the three remaining LRA leaders in order to bring them to justice.

The present situation clearly shows that the LRA remains capable of having a terrible impact on civilian populations and thus poses a continuing threat to regional security, notwithstanding the fact that over the years the group has seen its numbers reduced significantly as a result of the steps taken by Governments in the region, with the assistance of the international community.

It is crucial that all actors continue to be engaged until the LRA threat is removed. In that regard, Portugal welcomes the regional strategy developed by UNOCA, in coordination with the relevant United Nations actors and the African Union, to guide the efforts of the United Nations, including the United Nations peacekeeping missions in the region, and other stakeholders in support of international efforts, led by the African Union, to neutralize the threat posed by the LRA and to address the impact of its activities in the four affected countries.

The implementation of that strategy is a crucial step in order to translate the renewed attention given by the international community to the LRA issue in the past year into concrete results by attaining the five goals set in the strategy, including the full implementation of the African Union-led regional cooperation initiative.

We remain encouraged by the fact that the four LRA-affected countries have confirmed their willingness to contribute to the Regional Task Force and to provide premises for the various components of the regional initiative. We encourage them to further strengthen regional cooperation in order to overcome, with increased support from the international community, the important challenges that lie ahead regarding the implementation of the initiative, and thus succeed in apprehending the top commanders of the LRA and enhancing tactical coordination, information-sharing and joint planning.

At the same time, it is fundamental that committed efforts be deployed by all relevant actors in order to fulfil the other strategic objectives set in the regional strategy. These objectives are aimed at, first, enhancing the protection of civilians; secondly, expanding disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation or resettlement activities to cover LRA-affected areas; thirdly, promoting a coordinated humanitarian and child-protection response in those areas; and fourthly, providing support to the Governments of LRA-affected countries in the domains of peacebuilding, human rights, the rule of law and long-term development, thus enabling them to extend State authority throughout their territories.

Let me conclude with respect to the LRA by underlining once again the importance of sustaining the engagement of the Security Council on this issue. Thus, we firmly support the adoption today of a Security Council presidential statement, ensuring that the Council will continue to closely follow this issue. Portugal will spare no effort to continue to mobilize the international community and to improve the United Nations response to this scourge.

Let me now turn to UNOCA, whose work we believe will contribute significantly to enhancing the United Nations engagement towards the achievement of peace and security in Central Africa. We highlight the importance of UNOCA's continuing its close coordination with the Economic Community of Central African States and the United Nations Office for West Africa on relevant security challenges with a great impact not only on the West and Central Africa subregions, but to the entire international community, including security and terrorism, the fight against drug trafficking, piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, and illicit flows of arms and fighters.

As far as the LRA is concerned, the main issue linking the two comprehensive briefings we have had the opportunity to hear today, we welcome the fact that UNOCA will be responsible for overall monitoring and reporting on the regional strategy on the LRA. Let me conclude by reiterating strong support for UNOCA's innovative efforts addressed at helping to prevent the emergence of new conflicts, resolving existing ones by peaceful means, and promoting democratic and accountable governance in the subregion of Central Africa.

**Mr. Wittig** (Germany): I wish to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Abou Moussa for his briefing. Many thanks also go to Special Envoy Madeira for his information on the African Union-led regional initiative against the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA).

The humanitarian impact of the scourge of the LRA is unspeakable. It depends not on the size of the LRA, but on its massive use of violence, including sexual violence against women and children, abductions and horrifying attacks. It has uprooted hundreds of thousands of civilians across the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan. The ability of the LRA to operate across national borders and to exploit weak State authority in the region highlights the urgent need for a comprehensive, coherent and coordinated approach.

The threat posed by the LRA to regional stability needs to end. The human consequences of the LRA's atrocities need to be addressed. The protection of children deserves our special attention, as the LRA is synonymous with the brutal abduction and use of children as child soldiers, porters, spies and sex slaves. As Chair of the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, we will ensure a close follow-up of the latest report of the Secretary-General on the situation of children and armed conflict affected by the LRA (S/2012/365) and strive for comprehensive recommendations. We reiterate that a durable solution to the LRA threat requires both military efforts, carried out in compliance with international humanitarian and human rights law, and non-military efforts, including enhanced humanitarian aid and development measures.

It is against this backdrop that I would like to highlight three points.

First, the Governments of Uganda, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan are ultimately responsible for ending the LRA threat and for protecting their civilians. They need to be in the lead. Their political commitment and cooperation at the State, military and community levels are indispensable. We therefore want to encourage them to make the response to the LRA a national priority, to further strengthen their collaboration, and to invest all necessary resources in the implementation of the African Union (AU) initiative against the LRA. We commend the support that is provided in this regard by the United States to the affected countries.

The successful rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-LRA combatants could promote further defections. We therefore want to also encourage the countries of the region to put in place policies supporting defections, including through comprehensive disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation or resettlement (DDRRR) programmes, and to ensure a common approach with respect to a legal framework on the treatment of ex-LRA and abductees who have escaped from the LRA.

Secondly, we welcome the close collaboration between Special Representative Abou Moussa and Special Envoy Madeira in support of the AU initiative against the LRA. We consider the African Union involvement to be essential to strengthening coordination, information-sharing and trust among the four militaries of the LRA-affected countries. We also encourage the African Union to prioritize the protection of civilians and to implement a strategy in this regard. All military efforts against the LRA need to put the protection of civilians, notably also of children, front and centre.

Thirdly, we strongly welcome and support the United Nations regional strategy to address the LRA threat. It provides a good basis for improving cross-border mechanisms and regional inter-mission cooperation in all relevant fields. We commend the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) for its leading role in coordinating the strategy and all United Nations actors for their contributions.

The cooperation between the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan to extend MONUSCO's regional LRA communication strategy is a good example of enhanced inter-mission cooperation that is already in place. Further efforts are needed. We therefore encourage the swift implementation of the strategy. This will require the full commitment of all United Nations actors and external partners.

The successful implementation will also depend on the further support of the international community. Germany is committed to contributing to that end. Apart from humanitarian assistance provided to LRA-affected communities, we will support the expansion of MONUSCO's standard operating procedures for DDRRR across the region. The project will also provide support for sensitizing LRA combatants with the aim of

encouraging defections. All activities will also include capacity-building for national actors, including civil society.

UNOCA's follow-up of the regional strategy will be important and needs to remain a priority. The Security Council should be kept informed accordingly by a report of the Secretary-General, as suggested in the draft presidential statement prepared by the United Kingdom delegation, which we fully support.

Turning finally to UNOCA's wider role, we commend Special Representative Moussa and UNOCA for their contribution to peace and stability in the Central African region. We support the work priorities set out in the report of the Secretary-General, in particular support for the capacity-building of the Economic Community of Central African States in the field of early warning and conflict prevention, enhancing maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea, and for the AU-led efforts to address the LRA threats. These areas should remain at the core of UNOCA's activities. We welcome the established working relations between UNOCA and the United Nations Office for West Africa and the envisaged joint initiatives on terrorism and illicit flow of weapons across the two subregions. Given UNOCA's limited resources, it will remain crucial to prioritize its work programme and to focus on specific activities.

In closing, I want to express our support for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and UNOCA, including for UNOCA's mandate renewal in August.

**Mr. Kandangha-Bariki** (Togo) (*spoke in French*): Allow me, first of all, to thank Mr. Abou Moussa, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), as well as His Excellency Ambassador Francisco Caetano José Madeira, Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the African Union on Lord's Resistance Army Issues.

For several years now, the countries of the Central African subregion, with substantial support from the international community, have been untiring in their effort to rebuild a regional architecture for peace and security. Such a strategy has certainly not yet produced the expected results; but it has made it possible to ensure stability in several of the region's States. In that regard, my country welcomes the atmosphere of calm that currently prevails in most of the countries concerned, and we welcome the efforts made by their Governments, the various United Nations missions and all partners to achieve that outcome.

The current peaceful trend we see in various countries of the region should not, however, lead us to cease to express our great concern at the ongoing fighting in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in particular in North Kivu. That situation poses a great threat to the stability of the entire region. The fighting, which is pitting the armed forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo against the so-called M-23 Movement, is significantly undermining all the efforts made in recent years to bring lasting stability to that part of the country. This is also at the heart of the worrying situation concerning the deterioration in relations between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda. Given that especially troubling situation, Togo urges both countries to avoid any action that could lead to a direct confrontation. We also call on them to resume a genuine and frank dialogue without delay, with a view to safeguarding regional peace and security.

My country believes that one of the ways to decisively address the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is to carry out security sector reform, including a disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration programme (DDRRR). Both security sector reform and DDRRR are essential to the consolidation of peace and security.

The countries of Central Africa, but also those of West Africa, today face such new threats to security as piracy at sea, armed robbery along the shores of the Gulf of Guinea and trafficking in small arms as well as other sophisticated weapons. Those cross-cutting threats to security are a source of great concern. The require us to mobilize in a major way, respond robustly and carry out close cooperation among concerned countries of the region.

Togo is pleased that the Security Council has responded quickly to this situation by adopting various resolutions, including resolution 2039 (2012), which was adopted on 29 February. The commitment of the leaders of West and Central Africa to combat this scourge should be reflected in the decisions they take at the regional summit devoted to piracy at sea. My country welcomes UNOCA's initiatives in this regard and urges it to provide further assistance to the States of the region in order to ensure the success of the summit.

The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), in addition to being an armed group responsible for the worst of atrocities, especially against women and children, who are routinely kidnapped and forced to commit atrocities, as well as girls, who are used as sexual slaves, is also a serious threat to the peace and stability of various countries in Central and Eastern Africa, in particular Uganda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic and South Sudan, among others.

Although, thanks to the concerted efforts of the Governments concerned and by the international community, there was a decrease in 2011 in the nuisance posed by this terrorist group, it is nevertheless still the case that it remains active in various areas, including in Orientale province in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where many deadly attacks by this group have been recorded in recent months.

This climate of insecurity is only serving to worsen the humanitarian problems being experienced by the region. In that regard, I would refer to the existence of the 445,000 persons displaced as a result of the LRA's activities who are facing hunger and malnutrition. We encourage the countries of the region to work to ensure security for humanitarian organizations in order that they can come to the aid of those hundreds of thousands of displaced people.

We welcome the resolute determination of affected countries to join their efforts in order to more effectively combat the LRA. The strengthening of the early-warning system should help make it possible to exchange information and act in a concerted manner.

We also welcome the recent arrest of senior LRA leader Caesar Acellam Otto by Ugandan armed forces in the Central African Republic. This is unquestionably a significant gain in pursing LRA fighters. While Togo agrees that amnesty for a given number of the LRA fighters could contribute to resolving the issue, we nevertheless believe that the group's senior leaders and all those accused of serious crimes should answer for their actions before the law.

Moreover, we welcome the resolute response by the African Union in combating the LRA. On 24 March, the Union put in place a military force of 5,000 in Juba, the capital of South Sudan, whose mission is to put a definite end to the group's activities, including tracking and intercepting it's leader, Joseph Kony, wanted by the law at the international level for his outrages against children in Central Africa.

Joint efforts by the African Union and UNOCA, with the support of regional and international actors, as part of a regional strategy to combat the LRA, will certainly help to more effectively address the menace posed by this group. In that regard, we would like to thank organizations and countries such as the European Union and the United States, as well as all partners and donors, who are currently providing major logistical and financial support to combat the LRA. My delegation would like to take this opportunity to launch an urgent appeal for greater efforts on the part of the international community in overcoming the security and humanitarian challenges posed by the LRA for several years now.

In conclusion, Togo strongly supports the draft presidential statement that will most likely be adopted at the end of this meeting.

**Mr. DeLaurentis** (United States of America): I thank Special Representative Moussa and African Union Special Envoy Madeira for their statements this morning.

The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) has plagued Central Africa for far too long. The United States commends Special Representative Moussa and the United Nations for the comprehensive regional strategy devised to address the threat posed by the LRA once and for all. The real test of the strategy will be whether it translates into concrete action on the ground. The United States encourages United Nations missions in the region to help implement it and calls on other nations to address the gaps and areas for improvement that the United Nations has outlined.

The United States, in partnership with the African Union (AU) and the United Nations, supports the Governments of the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan and Uganda in their efforts to apprehend Joseph Kony and the top LRA commanders. Two months ago, President Obama announced that the United States will continue the deployment of a small number of United States military advisers who are assisting the forces of the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan and Uganda in pursuing the LRA and protecting local populations.

We welcome the significant progress made in weakening the LRA and commend Uganda on the capture of LRA senior commander Caesar Acellam Otto last month. The number of people reported killed by LRA attacks is low compared to previous years and most attacks are focused on looting food and supplies, suggesting that the LRA is in survival mode. Nevertheless, we must not forget that the LRA has been weakened before and has re-emerged when the pressure on it is reduced. Since the majority of reported LRA attacks and abductions occur in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the efforts of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) in coordination with the Congolese Government to increase focus on the LRA and help protect civilians are especially critical. More must be done to ensure that the LRA cannot gain breathing room in any part of the region. A future free of the LRA will require the continued resolve and stronger collaboration of regional Governments, and we welcome the AU's initiative aimed at helping to foster increased cooperation.

The United States believes that, along with military pressure, encouraging and helping members of the LRA to surrender is critical to weakening the organization. The United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic, MONUSCO and the United Nations Mission in South Sudan have already begun to expand disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration activities across all LRA-affected areas. In the weeks since Caesar Acellam Otto's capture, a few LRA fighters have surrendered peacefully. The United States is working with United Nations missions and military forces in the region to expand communications, including by distributing leaflets and making radio broadcasts urging LRA fighters to defect. We join regional Governments in calling on the remaining fighters and abductees in the LRA to surrender peacefully and return home. To assist in that effort, the United States is funding programmes aimed at addressing the psychological and social needs of former abducted children and helping them reunite with their families and communities.

As we support the region's efforts to dismantle the LRA and rehabilitate its abductees, we must continue to support the communities besieged by the LRA threat. The strategy of the United Nations rightly emphasizes the protection of civilians and humanitarian response. The United States funds programmes to help LRA-affected communities develop protection plans and connect with other communities. We also provide humanitarian assistance that targets 240,000 people across the LRA-affected region.

Beyond that of the LRA, the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) has a difficult set of challenges to address. Piracy and armed robbery at sea affect the peace and security of West and Central Africa. We are pleased to see that UNOCA and the United Nations Office for West Africa are making progress on the Council's request earlier this year for support to States and subregional organizations in convening a joint summit on piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea, and in developing a comprehensive strategy to address that threat.

In conclusion, we would like to commend the thousands of United Nations peacekeepers, observers and humanitarian and human rights workers for their dedication and sacrifice as they work to promote peace in Central Africa.

**Mr. Alzate** (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), Mr. Abou Moussa, for his comprehensive and instructive remarks. I would also like to take this opportunity to highlight the efforts and energy that he has brought to launching UNOCA's work. Similarly, I would like to thank the Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on Lord's Resistance Army Issues, Ambassador Francisco Caetano José Madeira, for his informative briefing.

In recent years, Central Africa has made considerable progress in consolidating its democratic political systems, strengthening its institutions, achieving economic growth and establishing cooperation mechanisms that enable it to provide coordinated responses to the various cross-border problems affecting States in the subregion. We very much welcome the fact that three Central African countries have launched electoral processes, and that the average economic growth for 2011 was 5.2 per cent and is expected to reach an even higher level in 2012. Similarly, we should highlight the dynamism of the national debates on political, electoral, economic and human rights reform.

Despite such progress, as the Secretary-General's report (S/2012/421) explains, national authorities must

be supported so that they can establish frameworks that will enable them to develop and strengthen national and regional institutions and capacities so that they can address the various challenges that have the potential to jeopardize the security and stability of the countries and the region as a whole.

In that context, UNOCA has a particular role to play in formulating regional approaches aimed at addressing the security problems affecting Central Africa. To that end, the support and closely coordinated efforts of the entire United Nations system are crucial to making a reality of the motto "Delivering as one". UNOCA plays a very important role in channelling and promoting dialogue and exchange between the subregion and the United Nations system.

Electoral issues, systems for protecting human rights, the various manifestations of transnational organized crime, piracy and armed robbery in the Gulf of Guinea and the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons are priority areas on which UNOCA must continue to focus the attention and coordination of the various United Nations agencies and programmes, as well as of the international community in general, with the goal of promoting an approach based on cooperation and on strengthening national and subregional capacities.

While progress has been made in combating the Lord's Resistance Army, the group continues to pose a serious threat to the security of countries in the region, and its activities continue to have very bad humanitarian effects on the population. Grave violations of international humanitarian law and of human rights are the key traits that define and characterize the actions of one of the worst armed groups ever to have emerged in history.

We welcome the actions undertaken by the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan and Uganda. We very much welcome the support and cooperation that has been provided by the African Union as led by Special Envoy Francisco Caetano José Madeira, the United States of America and the European Union in order to meet the challenges posed by the Lord's Resistance Army.

In the same vein, we are pleased to acknowledge the further development of the United Nations regional strategy to address the threats and impact of the activities of the Lord's Resistance Army, which is a fundamental tool designed to guide the actions of the United Nations in support of the regional cooperation initiative against the Lord's Resistance Army led by the African Union. Now is the time for the sustained and comprehensive implementation of the strategy, with equal importance to be attached to all of its components. Achieving lasting and definitive success against the Lord's Resistance Army will require long-term political commitment, the provision of sufficient resources and the effective coordination of all stakeholders with the aim of achieving quantifiable, feasible objectives.

Particular attention must be paid to addressing the precarious living conditions of the population dwelling in the areas affected by the presence of the Lord's Resistance Army. There is a need for the implementation of robust economic development programmes that will improve social and economic indicators and which will enable the population to live in an environment conducive to their well-being.

Finally, we wish to express our support for the draft presidential statement that has been prepared on the issue.

**Mr. Tarar** (Pakistan): We would like to thank Special Representative Abou Moussa for his briefing and for his invaluable work as the Head of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA). We also extend our gratitude to the Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on Lord's Resistance Army Issues, Ambassador Francisco Caetano José Madeira, for his statement.

The report of the Secretary General on the activities of UNOCA and on areas affected by the Lord's Resistance Army (S/2012/421) highlights several challenges being faced by the subregion, including a fragile security situation, the proliferation of weapons, the menace of transatlantic crime, the issue of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, and threats posed by terrorism and the activities of armed groups, including the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). As noted by the report, those challenges have been further exacerbated due to an influx of illegal arms and combatants in the region as part of the fallout of the Libyan crisis. Addressing those cross-cutting challenges requires greater collaboration and coordination at the regional and subregional levels.

Against that backdrop, the work of UNOCA remains important for the peace and stability of the subregion through mediation and the provision of good offices, ensuring a coherent and coordinated United Nations system response to challenges faced by the

subregion and strengthening the capacity of subregional organizations to address regional peace and security challenges.

We are deeply concerned at the increased attacks against civilians by the LRA and the resulting displacement of populations in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan. The threat posed by the LRA requires a coordinated regional and international response entailing a comprehensive approach aimed not only at eliminating and bringing to justice the remaining leadership of the LRA, but also towards strengthening the State capacity of the relevant countries and addressing the long-term developmental needs of the LRA-affected areas.

In that regard, we welcome the development by UNOCA, in collaboration with the relevant stakeholders, of the United Nations regional strategy to address the threat and impact of the activities of the LRA. We hope that the strategy will provide a strong basis for a comprehensive response to the threat posed by the LRA. We also welcome the launching of the African Union-led regional cooperation initiative against LRA and the commitment of the LRA-affected countries to contribute troops to the regional task force under the initiative.

The successful implementation of the initiative hinges on the availability of adequate and timely resources and on building the requisite capacities of the militaries in the LRA-affected countries. The international community should provide the resources needed for the successful implementation of the initiative, in line with the priorities identified by the African Union and consistent with the principle of national ownership.

Pakistan will continue to support all efforts for durable peace and stability in Central Africa and for countering the threat posed by the LRA to the subregion.

**Mr. Zhukov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to Mr. Moussa and Mr. Madeira for their briefings.

We share the assessments and conclusions contained in the reports of the Secretary-General (S/2012/365 and S/2012/421). We note some progress in consolidating democratic processes in a number of States in the subregion, including the peaceful holding of elections and the orderly transition of power. We also welcome the efforts of Central African countries to encourage regional integration and cross-border cooperation.

A serious threat to peace and stability continues to be posed by the work of armed groups and the uninterrupted flow of weapons and combatants as a result of the negative impact of the Libyan crisis. In this regard, we attach great significance to the efforts to strengthen security in countries in the subregion, including the signing of the Kinshasa Convention for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons. Of no lesser importance are measures taken by States in the Gulf of Guinea to combat armed piracy in coastal waters, including the preparation of a regional summit on this issue, with the participation of all interested parties.

We are concerned by the growth in the activity of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). We have seen more than 50 attacks on civilians in the first three months of this year alone. Due to looting, approximately 450,600 people are still refugees and internally displaced persons in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Central African Republic and South Sudan. The work of this group is seriously destabilizing the military, political and humanitarian situation in the affected areas, and it undermines the efforts at their post-conflict recovery.

We call for a comprehensive approach to handling this issue, which calls for the implementation of military, political, socio-economic, humanitarian and outreach measures. That would allow us to eliminate the breeding ground for the work of the Lord's Resistance Army, including by means of strengthening State institutions and alleviating poverty and mass unemployment. We believe it is important to take steps to extend State authority to remote areas and to ensure sustainable socio-economic development there. We believe it is equally urgent to steadily implement disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration programmes for ex-combatants and to strengthen and effectively reform the security sector.

We welcome the growing cooperation of States in the subregion in regional and international organizations and with other parties interested in combating this group. We note the official launching in the spring of 2012 of the corresponding initiative by the African Union (AU), which calls in particular for the establishment of an operational force of 5,000 soldiers from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic, South Sudan and Uganda.

We believe that the regional United Nations strategy to counteract the LRA, which the Council has developed through the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) and with the AU and other partners, will help broaden the coordination of collective efforts in this area. That document, which is in our view solid, charts the full range of interrelated goals, objectives and activities to combat that militia and to eliminate the consequences of its criminal activity for the countries in the subregion.

We note the contribution of UNOCA to the collective efforts to combat the LRA and the key role it has in preventing conflicts, ensuring peace and security, peacebuilding and strengthening the coordination of the United Nations work and the work of regional and subregional organizations in Central Africa.

**Mr. Rosenthal** (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would like to thank Mr. Abou Moussa for the informative briefing that he has given us concerning the work of his office and for his report on the areas affected by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). We also thank Ambassador Francisco Caetano José Madeira for the very useful information he has given us.

We welcome the measures adopted by the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) to facilitate regional initiatives and coordinate the activities undertaken by the entities of the United Nations to prevent conflicts and help build peace in the Central African region. UNOCA has an important role to play. We commend the determination of UNOCA to work closely with the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA) in order to tackle the serious security problems that face those two subregions. The joint efforts of UNOCA and UNOWA will be indispensable in dealing with the negative repercussions of the conflict in Libya for Western and Central Africa and for insecurity in the Sahel region. We call upon UNOCA to continue its efforts in order to enhance coordination of the United Nations missions that are working in the region, and to promote cooperation with regional organizations such as the Economic Community of Central African States and the African Union.

As for the Lord's Resistance Army, my delegation remains concerned, of course, by the devastating effects that this armed group and its current activities continue to have in the areas within which it operates. The brutality of its activities continues to threaten thousands of innocent civilians, including women and children.

We therefore support the regional strategy presented by UNOCA in cooperation with the African Union to combat the initiatives of the Lord's Resistance Army, improve efforts to promote the protection of civilians by establishing mechanisms for humanitarian assistance and for the protection of children in all of the affected areas, and provide assistance to the Governments that are affected by this rebel group. We encourage the authorities of each of the affected countries to lend their support and cooperation to this strategy for the benefit of their peoples, who for decades now have had to suffer under the scourge of this armed group.

Once again, we vigorously condemn the violations that have been committed and that unfortunately continue to be committed by the Lord's Resistance Army and we express our solidarity with the victims. Guatemala has also been a direct victim of the attacks perpetrated by that armed group. In January 2006, eight Guatemalan peacekeeping officers who had been deployed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo lost their lives in Garamba National Park when they were ambushed by members of the Lord's Resistance Army. We still hope that one day the perpetrators of those acts will be brought to justice. For that reason, we urge for the execution of the arrest warrants that were issued by the International Criminal Court for the three leaders of the Lord's Resistance Army who have been charged with, among others things, war crimes and crimes against humanity. We encourage all States to cooperate with the Court in order to execute those warrants and to bring the perpetrators of those atrocities to justice.

Finally, we would like to express our support for the draft presidential statement to be adopted today.

**Mr. Briens** (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his reports (S/2012/365 and S/2012/421) and for developing the regional strategy on the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) as requested by the Security Council in its presidential statement of 14 November 2011 (S/PRST/2011/21).

I would also like to thank Mr. Abou Moussa, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa, and Ambassador Francisco Caetano José Madeira, Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on Lord's Resistance Army Issues, for their briefings.

The initiatives implemented up to now by the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) show the vigor of that recently created Office. A number of political and security challenges remain in Central Africa and require a pooling of efforts by all stakeholders. We welcome the efforts made by UNOCA to that end.

The fight against piracy in the Gulf of Guinea is also a source of concern for the Security Council. We welcome the upcoming summit of heads of State on piracy and armed robbery in the Gulf of Guinea, which is made possible by support from UNOCA. The holding of that summit, as requested by the Council in resolution 2039 (2012), will allow participants to develop a regional anti-piracy strategy.

Efforts to combat all forms of transnational organized crime must also be pursued and, in that regard, we welcome the signing between UNOCA and the Economic Community of West African States of a cooperation framework defining priority themes for partnerships, such as political governance and combating weapons proliferation.

With regard to supporting democracy in the region, we reiterate the need for the holding of free and transparent elections to establish lasting peace in Africa. We encourage UNOCA to continue to support national efforts on that issue.

Among the challenges of peace and security in Central Africa, the Lord's Resistance Army remains a subject of major concern. We would like to thank UNOCA for developing the United Nations regional strategy, which complements the existing mechanisms through specific objectives and measures and will allow us to strengthen the coherence and coordination of United Nations activities and of other stakeholders.

Given the ongoing threats alluded to by a number of speakers, efforts made up to now must be pursued and consolidated in a coordinated fashion. In terms of security, our priority must be to ensure the protection of civilians. We support the numerous initiatives of partners on the ground to establish early warning mechanisms.

Once again, we reiterate our full support for the work done by the troops of our partners in Central Africa. We also encourage the defection of rebels. In that regard, the existing programmes of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and resettlement or repatriation (DDRRR) must be extended to all affected areas. Particular focus should be put on reintegration with the establishment of appropriate welcoming structures. We support the strategy proposal whereby the offices and missions of the United Nations must develop a common approach for the DDRRR process and establish standard procedures for welcoming children who were previously enlisted.

At the same time, ongoing efforts to arrest and bring to justice the top leaders of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), including Joseph Kony, must be pursued. We encourage States concerned to strengthen their cooperation with the International Criminal Court in that regard.

France supports all of those efforts through its contribution to the Peace Facility for Africa of the European Union, which approved granting €1.2 million to the African Union at the end of 2011. France also bilaterally supports the States affected by the LRA by, for example, contributing significantly on an ongoing basis with the Central African Republic on military matters. We support in particular the capacity-building of the Central African armed forces. We also provide humanitarian assistance to the populations affected by the attacks and conduct socio-economic reintegration programmes for child soldiers in the four countries concerned.

In conclusion, we encourage States affected by the LRA that have a lead role to play to maintain their efforts with determination. We are at their side. We must not let up in our efforts to sustainably put an end to the threat of the LRA and comfort the civilian populations.

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of China.

Currently, the overall political situation in Central Africa is stable. Economic development has achieved results and countries of the region are continuing with the integration process. China finds that gratifying.

We note, at the same time, that efforts to achieve lasting peace and sustainable development in Central Africa still face many challenges, with the region's weak economic foundation and rampant transnational organized crime, which seriously undermine social stability. In particular, the Libyan crisis caused the proliferation of arms in the Sahel region as a result of arms smuggling, which threatens the peace and

security of some countries in the region. China is very concerned about that.

China hopes that the international community will pay more attention to central Africa and provide effective help. We are willing to continue to play an active and constructive role in that regard.

China strongly condemns the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA,) which continues to move around in many countries, causing instability and damage. We are seriously concerned by the humanitarian problems caused by LRA activities. We support the countries of the region in their efforts to combat the LRA, welcome the relevant African Union cooperation initiative and appreciate the regional strategy formulated by the United Nations to combat the LRA. We hope that various actors in the international community will enhance communication, coordinate action and guarantee the provision of sufficient resources to ensure the effective implementation of both the initiative and the strategy.

China appreciates the efforts made by the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) to maintain regional peace and security in that area and will continue to support the work of UNOCA and the Special Representative Moussa.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

The Council has before it the text of a draft presidential statement on behalf of the Council on the subject of today's meeting. I thank the Council members for their valuable contributions to the draft statement.

In accordance with understanding reached among the members of the Council, I shall take it that the members of the Security Council agree to the statement, which will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2012/18.

It is so decided.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Central African Republic.

**Mr. Doubane** (Central African Republic): As this is the second time that I am taking the floor this June to address the Council, allow me, Mr. President, to commend you for the outstanding manner in which you are guiding the work of the Council.

The presentation of the report (S/2012/421) of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) and on areas affected by the Lord's Resistance Army provides the delegation of the Central African Republic, of which I am the head, a further opportunity to first commend the Secretary-General for his clear and concise depiction of the situation in Central Africa, and, secondly, to thank his Special Representative, Mr. Abou Moussa, for the dedicated manner in which he is leading his mission in the subregion. I would like also to convey my gratitude to Mr. Francisco Madeira, Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on Lord's Resistance Army issues, who is also working tirelessly to eradicate the scourge of the LRA in those countries that are the victims of the atrocities perpetrated by that group of bandits and criminals. Finally, I should like to congratulate Mr. Guélengdouksia Ouaidou on his election to the post of Secretary-General of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), which is a subregional partner.

The Central African Republic is addressing the Council today so as to convey a message in its capacity as, first, a country that is a victim of the LRA; secondly, as a fragile country of the subregion that is racked by increasing insecurity; and, thirdly, as a member of the international community, in order to mobilize that community to pay closer attention to the situation that prevails there.

Since 2008 the LRA has been killing, robbing and plundering, and recruiting women, children and men in the east, south-east and north-east parts of my country, the Central African Republic. We would recall once again that we share no border with Uganda; nor do we share any common history with that brotherly State. The people of the Central African Republic therefore continue to wonder what the real motives for that aggression are. By way of illustration, in the year 2012 alone the LRA has carried out 20 attacks, and its actions have resulted in numerous deaths and abductions, displaced 20,400 people and left in their wake 5,000 refugees and 3,000 children kept out of school — all of which is taking place against the backdrop of a shredded socio-economic fabric.

That impoverished area, where life is precarious, is profoundly destabilized, which further complicates the delivery of assistance and other humanitarian efforts intended for the benefit of the victims and the local host populations. Today the greatest hope of these weary people is to see this scourge ended once and for all, so

that peace — the prerequisite for development — can return once and for all.

Mr. Kony and his band of barbarians must be neutralized. They must be arrested and tried for their countless unspeakable crimes perpetrated against peaceful citizens. That will lead to the release of our children, allowing them to return home to their families, schools and games.

Allow me to take this opportunity to respond to the many letters that we have received from schoolchildren worldwide drawing the attention of the Government of the Central African Republic to the alarming issue of children abducted in conflict areas, in particular by the LRA. Here and now, we reiterate to them — and in doing so support the position of Germany — that we have heard them, that the situation is being duly addressed and that we will spare no effort in order to ensure that our Government, international organizations — the United Nations in particular — UNICEF and the International Committee of the Red Cross work together to resolve this issue. Let me say it once again: children belong with their families, in school or on the playground.

In that way women, the pillars of our society, freed from the yoke of the sexual servitude to which they have been condemned, will also be able to rejoin their families.

On the basis of those aspirations, the highest authorities of my country are sparing no effort to end this harsh rebellion, working jointly and in a coordinated manner with the defence and security forces of the subregion.

Here we wish, on behalf of all the people of the Central African Republic, to express our gratitude for the efforts made by the United Nations, the African Union, ECCAS, the European Union, France and the United States Government, whose military advisers are actively working side by side with us on the ground. We wish also to thank the agencies of the United Nations system and the non-governmental organizations, both national and international, which every day are working for the benefit of the local populations, displaced persons, refugees and other victims.

In this struggling subregion, in a world that is fraught with many dangers, closer attention should be paid to this part of Africa, which is shaped like a gun, with the trigger, unfortunately, at the very heart of the continent. Supporting the peace process and helping to stabilize the countries of the subregion is like taking out life insurance for the stability of our continent; supporting the efforts of the subregion is to lay the foundations for holistic and long-lasting development.

The LRA is a terrorist movement. It is the perpetrator of trans-border crimes. It impedes development, and for all of those reasons it must be combated. Mr. Kony and his men are vile criminals, and there can be no tolerance for them. We therefore call with all our hearts for the mobilization of the international community as a whole so as to put an end to this mockery, which is an affront to our civilized world.

Central Africa, and my country in particular, aspires to and desires peace so to enable our development. The Council's commitment to stand by our side is all the more necessary as it is in keeping with the aspirations and objectives of our Organization.

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): We are drawing near to the end of the work of the Council for this month. On behalf of the Chinese delegation, I should like to thank all the members of the Council, in particular my colleagues the Permanent Representatives, the Deputy Permanent Representatives and their teams. My thanks also go the Secretariat for all the support it has provided to facilitate our work. Indeed, we had a very busy month. We reached consensus on some major issues. Without the support and hard work of delegations and of the Secretariat, including the interpreters, translators, conference officers and sound engineers, we would not have been able to complete our work on our own.

As China wraps up its presidency, I should like, on behalf of the Council, to wish the Colombian delegation a successful month of July.

There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

*The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.*